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R. L. C.

THE

MOSAIC WORKERS;

A TALE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

THE ORCO;

A TRADITION.

TRANSLATED

FROM THE FRENCH OF GEORGE SAND

By E. A. A.

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BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA·

INTRODUCTION.

You reproach me, my child, for always telling you tales with a mournful ending; or else stories, so long, so long, that slumber comes in the sweetest part. Think you, little one, that your old father can always have laughing thoughts, after so rude a winter; after a spring so pale, so cold, so rheumatismal? Whilst the sad north-wind moans through our old fir-trees, whilst the crane utters her cry of distress at the sound of the Angelus, saluting the pale and icy dawn, my thoughts are only of blood and mourning. Livid spectres dance around my fading lamp, and I rise in anxiety to drive them from your couch. But the time is no more, when children believed in spectres. You smile when we relate to you the terrors and superstitions which encircled our infancy; those legends of haunting spirits, which kept us waking and trembling in our beds till the dreary sound of Matins, lull you to peaceful sleep in your cradles. It is then a story quite simple, quite natural, which you wish for, young sceptic? I will endeavour to recall one which the Abbe Panorio *related to* Beppa, during my stay at

Venice. He was of your opinion as to storie
was satiated with the fantastic; and the confes
old devotees had given him a horror for sorcere
visions. He was, besides, but little inclined
sentimental. The tender passions of romance
to him extremely wearisome; but, like you, he
terested in the reveries of lovers of nature;
labours and tribulations of artists. His tales
ways a foundation of historical reality; and,
sometimes made us sad, they always inculcated a
moral, or a consoling truth.

One beautiful summer night, by the full soft
the moon of the oriental seas, seated under a
trellis, enjoying the sweet odour of the vine,
jasmine, we were supping gaily, about midni
the gardens of Santa-Margarita. Our party co
of Assem Zuzuf, an honest merchant of Corcyra,
Lelio, first singer at the theatre of La Feni
doctor Acroceronius, the charming Beppa,
handsome Abbe Panorio. A nightingale was
in its leafy cage, suspended from the trellis
sheltered our table; whilst the ices went round,
tuned her lute, and sang with a voice even mor
dious than that of the nightingale. The jealous bi
interrupted her with a precipitate roulade, a
burst of melody, or lyrical declamation; then
tinguished the tapers, and the nightingale ce

song, whilst the moon shed pale sapphires and glancing diamonds over the crystal and silver vases spread before us. The waves broke in the distance with a voluptuous sound upon the flowery shore; and the wind brought to our ears, from time to time, the slow and monotonous recitative of the gondolier:

Intanto la bella Erminia fugge, etc.

Then the Abbe spoke of the bright days of the republic, and the illustrious deeds of the times of his country's power and glory; or he would take a pleasure in recalling her hours of show and splendour. Although but young, the Abbe knew more of the history of Venice than the oldest of her citizens. He had studied it in her monuments and records with the study of love. He delighted to seek in the popular traditions, details of the lives of great artists. One day *apropos* of Titian and Tintoretto, he told us the incidents I will now endeavour to recall, if the soft wind which waves our willows, and the lark singing on high her song of ecstasy, are not interrupted by the storm blast; and if the spring breeze, which half opens the buds of our indolent roses, and which warms my heart, will deign to breathe over us until to-morrow morning.

THE MOSAIC WORKERS.

CHAPTER I.

"Believe me, Messer Jacopo, I am an unfortunate father. Nothing can console me for this disgrace. We live in a declining age, and it is I who say so. The human race is degenerating. The spirit of good government is fading away in families. In my time, every one used to try at least to equal, if not to surpass his ancestors. Now, so long as a fortune can be obtained, no matter how, no one objects to any degree of self derogation. The noble becomes a merchant, the master a journeyman, the architect a mason, and the mason a mere labourer.—Holy Virgin where will this end?"

So spoke Messer Sebastian Zuccato, a painter, who, though now forgotten, was then highly esteemed as the founder of a school of painting, to the illustrious master, Jacques Robusti, better known now under the name of Tintoretto.

"Ah! Ah!" answered the master, who from habitual absence of mind, often answered with an excess of sincerity, "it is much better to be a good workman than a mediocre *master; a great artisan*, than a vulgar *artist.*"

"Stop, stop, my good master," cried old Zuccato a little piqued; "whom are you styling a vulgar artist a mediocre painter?—the syndic of all the painters the master of so many masters, who make the present glory of Venice, and form a sublime constellation, in which you yourself are one of the bright particular stars, but where my pupil Tiziana Vecelli shines with no less lustre."

"Very well, Messer Sebastian," answered Tintoretto, coolly; "if such stars and such constellations enlighten the republic, if your school produces such masters, commencing by the sublime Titian, before whom I bow without jealousy, and without resentment we cannot be living in such a declining age as you were mourning over just now."

"Well well," said the sorrowful old man, a little impatiently; "no doubt we live in a grand age for the fine arts. But I can never console myself for having contributed to its grandeur, and being the last to enjoy it. What avails it to me, to have educated a Titian if no one cares for it? Who will even know it a hundred years hence? Even now it is only known through this great man's gratitude, who is always praising me, and calls me his dear comrade. But what is that even?—Why did it not please heaven to make me Titian's father? why is he not a Zuccato, or I a Vecelli? Then at least my name would have lived from age to age, and perhaps a thousand years hence, the world would have said: 'The first of this name was an excellent master.' Whilst now, I have two sons as careless of the honour of my name, as they are faithless to the noble muses; two sons, who, with their brilliant *capacities, might* have been my glory, might perhaps

have surpassed Giorgione, Schiavone, the Bellinis, Paul Veronese, Titian, and Tintoretto himself.... Yes, I am not afraid of saying that, with their natural talent, and the instruction which even in my old age I could give them, they might even now wipe off their dishonour, quit the workman's ladder, and mount the painter's scaffold. My dear master, you must give me another proof of the friendship with which you honour me, by joining your entreaties to those of Titian, in order to produce some effect on my misguided children. If you would but save Francesco he would influence his brother, for Valerio is a young man of no judgment, and I should say were he not my son, almost without talent, if he had not occasionally shown some when sketching fresco borders on the walls of my studio. But Checo is quite another being, he handles the brush like a master, and often suggests to the painters themselves those lofty conceptions which they, which even you, Messer Jacopo, as you have often told me, only execute. Besides, he is acute, active, persevering, restless, ambitious; he has all the qualities of an artist. I cannot imagine how he can so completely have mistaken his vocation.

"I will do as you wish," answered Tintoretto, "but first I will tell you my honest opinion as to your anger against your son's profession. Mosaic is not what you style it, an ignoble trade, but a true art brought from Greece by skilful masters. It is an art of which we ought to speak with great respect, for it, and it alone, has preserved to us even more completely than painting on metals, the otherwise lost traditions *of the state* of design in the lower *empire. If it has transcribed* them in an altered

and doubtful shape, it is not the less true that, without it, we should have lost them entirely. Canvas cannot withstand the ravages of time. Apelles and Zeuxis have left but their names. What gratitude should we not now feel to any generous artist, who had eternized their works by the aid of marble and crystal. Besides, the mosaic art has preserved to us entire the traditions of colouring, and on this point far from being inferior to painting, it has an undeniable superiority,—it resists the encroachments of time, as well as the injuries of the atmosphere."

"Pray why, if it resists them all so well," said Zuccato hastily, "is the senate obliged to repair all the dome of St. Mark, which now is as bare as my head?"

"Because at the time when those mosaics were done, Greek artists were rare at Venice, they came from a distance, stayed only a short time, and left the finish of their compositions to hastily instructed apprentices, who executed them without knowing their trade well, and who could not give their works the necessary solidity. Now, when the art has been cultivated for some ages we Venetians have become as skilful as the Greeks ever were, and the works of your son Francesco will go down to posterity, and his name will be blessed for having traced those unalterable frescos on the walls of our cathedral; the canvas on which Titian and Veronese have painted their *chef-d'œuvre* will fall to pieces, and a day will come when our greatest masters will only be remembered through the mosaics of the Zuccati.

"It follows then," said the obstinate old man, "that Scarpo, my shoemaker is a far greater artist than the Deity; for my foot, though the work of Divinity, will *fall to dust, whilst* my shoes may keep for ages the

form and impress of my foot."

"But the colour! Messer Sebastian, the colour! your comparison is worth nothing. What substance worked by the hand of man can keep the colour of your flesh for an unlimited period? whilst marble and metal, being primitive and imperishable substances will retain even to their last grain of dust, the Venetian colouring, the finest in the world, and before which Buonarotti and all his Florentine school must lower their flag. No, no, you are in error, Messer Sebastian and you are unjust if you do not rather say, Honour to the engraver, preserver, and propagator of pure outline —Honour to the Mosaist, guardian and preserver of colour!"

"Your humble servant," said the old man, "thanks for your good advice, but for all that I beg you will inscribe my name upon my tombstone with the word "Painter," that it may not be forgotten by the next year, that there was one of my name who handled the paint brush and not the trowel."

"But, Messer Sebastian," said the good master detaining him, "you have not even seen the last performances of your sons in the interior of the cathedral."

"God forbid that I should see Francesco and Valerio Zuccato hoisted by ropes like slaters, cutting enamel and working mastic."

"But you know, my good Sebastian, that these works have obtained the highest eulogiums from the Senate, and very high recompense from the republic."

"I know well," replied the old man, haughtily, "that there is mounted on the ladders of the cathedral of Saint Mark, a young *man who is* my eldest son, and *who for one hundred ducats* a-year has abandoned the

noble profession of his fathers, in spite of the reproaches of his conscience and the conflicts of his pride. I know also that the pavements of Venice are trodden by my second son, who to pay for his foolish pleasures and expenses has given up all pride, and actually takes wages from his own brother, and only quits the too extravagant dress of dissipation for the too humble apron of the workman, spending his evenings, playing the patrician in a gondola, and working the next day like a journeyman mason, to pay for the supper and serenade of the past evening. This is what I know, Messer, and nothing but this—"

And I repeat to you, Messer Sebastian," replied Tintoretto, " that you have two good and noble children, who are excellent artists, one industrious, patient, ingenious, excellent, exact, allowed by all to be a master of his art, whilst the other is amiable, brave, and jovial, full of spirit and fire, less assiduous in his employment, but perhaps even more fruitful in grand ideas and sublime conceptions."

" Oh, yes," replied the old man, " and yet more fruitful in words. I have had enough to do with those theorizers, who *feel art* as they call it, who explain it, define it, and exalt it, but do not work for it; they are the nuisance of the Studios, they make the noise whilst others do the work. They think themselves of far too noble a race to work, or else they have so much talent they don't know how to use it; the mere inspiration kills them, and in order not to be too much worn out by it, they chatter about art, or walk the streets from morning to night—apparently it is from the fear, *lest the* inspiration of art and the work of his hands *should injure his* health, that Messer Valerio my son,

instead of working with his ten fingers, lets all his intellect out by his lips. That boy has always made the same impression upon me that a canvass would, on which the first ideas of many subjects were sketched without any of them being effaced, and which thus in a short time would present the strange spectacle of a multitude of incoherent lines, each of which may have had some intention at first, but which the artist, at last lost in his own chaos, has never been able to resume or follow out."

"I own Valerio is a little dissipated, and tolerably idle," replied the master; "I must admonish him again, in virtue of the paternal authority which he has himself yielded me, by betrothing himself to my little Marietta."

"And do you still suffer that pleasantry?" said the old painter, trying to disguise the secret pleasure this information, confirmed by the mouth of Robusti himself, caused him: "can you permit an artisan, nay not even an artisan, an apprentice, to aspire even jestingly to the hand of your daughter—Messer Jacopo, I declare to you that if I had a daughter, and Valerio Zuccato instead of being my son, were my nephew, I would not even let him dream of marrying her."

"Oh, that's my wife's business," replied Robusti, "and will be my daughter's, when she is old enough to be married. Maria has talent, a great deal of talent, I hope she will soon paint portraits, I shall not be ashamed to sign, and which posterity will actually ascribe to me; I hopeshe will make for herself a celebrated name, and consequently an illustrious position. An independent fortune is insured to her by my exertions. Let *her then, if she chooses,* marry Valerio, or even

Bartolomeo Bozza, the apprentice of the apprentice, she is not the less Maria Robusti, daughter, pupil, and successor of Tintoretto. Some women can afford to marry for their happiness, and not for their interest. The young patricians of the present day are more inclined towards their pages, than towards the noble cavaliers who are offered to their choice. Maria is a patrician also in her way. Let her then act like a patrician. Besides, do you know that the child really loves Valerio?"

Old Zuccato shook his head without replying, that his gratitude and joy might not betray itself. But the master could perceive that his temper was softened, and after a long discussion in which Sebastian defended himself inch by inch, but with less bitterness than at the commencement, he allowed himself to be led away to the cathedral, where the brothers Zuccato were finishing the grand mosaic of the dome just above the principal interior door. The subject was taken from the Apocalypse, and the designs were by Titian and Tintoretto themselves

CHAPTER II.

When old Zuccato entered the oriental cupola, where on a gilded back-ground there appeared, like terrible apparitions, the colossal figures of the prophets and the apocalyptic forms invoked in their visions, he was affected by a superstitious awe, which, resisting his efforts to subdue it, made his feelings as an artist, at first yield to those of religion; he crossed himself, saluted the altar, which was illuminated by golden lamps burning dimly in the distance, and depositing his plumed cap upon the marble pavement, he recited a short prayer. When he had finished, he rose slowly from his kneeling posture, which the stiffness of his limbs, caused by age, rendered a painful one, and directed his attention to the figures of the four evangelists, which were the nearest to him. But as his sight was weak, he could only get an idea of the *tout ensemble*, and turning to Tintoretto, said: "It cannot be denied that these great masses of colour produce some effect, but it is nothing but mere charlatanism after all.—Oh! oh! sir, there you are." These last words were addressed to a tall, pale young man, who, hearing the echo of the cupola repeat the sharp and broken tones of his father's voice, had descended hastily on his ladder in order to receive him. Francesco Zuccato, after having combated gently and with moderation the *prejudices of his father*, had ended by *following his vocation, and, avoiding* frequent interviews

which could only renew the subject of discord, was still on all occasions humble and respectful towards the author of his days. In order to receive him more respectfully, he had hastily washed his face and hands, thrown off his working apron, and put on his silken robe ornamented with silver, which one of his apprentices brought him. In this costume he looked as handsome and elegant as the most fashionable young patrician. But his melancholy brow and the gravity of his smile bore the impress of the noble cares, and the sacred pride of the artist.

Old Zuccato gazed at him from head to foot, and resisting his paternal feelings, said ironically:

"Well, sir, what plan must we pursue, in order to be able to admire your *chefs-d'œuvre*. If they were not, body and soul, so completely part and parcel of the wall, we would ask you to lower one or two of them, but you doubtless understand the interests of your own glory best, by placing them so high that no one can see them."

"My father," replied the young man modestly, "the happiest day of my life would be that on which these humble productions should obtain an indulgent consideration from you, but your severity is a far greater obstacle than any which separates you from the dome itself. If I could conquer your repugnance, I have no doubt that, with my brother's assistance, I could get you to the top of the scaffolding, whence you might easily embrace the *coup dœil*, and catch the design of the figures, which is concealed from you where you stand."

"*Your* brother indeed!" replied the old grumbler, "*and pray where* is your brother? Does he not deign

id from his glass beadwork-heaven up there, his father?"

rother has gone out," replied Francesco, "or ould have hastened to put on his robe, and h me to kiss your hand, but I expect him every and he will be delighted to see you here."

I suppose as usual, he will come in singing a song, his cap on one side, his eye wandering, ait unsteady. A workman who frequents the ring working hours, would indeed be a trusty all your ladders there!"

ather, Valerio is not gone to the tavern. He to fetch materials for our work. I have sent e manufactory at Murano for some specimens l, which have been made expressly for me, and shades of which are very difficult to obtain."

at case you may make my compliments to self, for there are two leagues between here rano, and he has the water * against ch will answer his purpose two ways. The may serve his turn for stopping to drink boatmen, and the oar will not fit his hand to- er than the trowel."

er, you have heard false reports of Valerio," he young man eagerly. "It is true he likes and Cyprus wine, but it does not interrupt his . He is an excellent workman, and whenever im to execute a commission, he fulfils it with itude and intelligence which leave nothing to ed."

erio, here is Messer Valerio," exclaimed from

* reflux which *is felt in the Lagoons* at certain hours *their navigation difficult.*

the top of the scaffolding, the apprentice Bartolomeo, who could see through one of the openings in the cupola, the arrival of the gondola at the Piazetta steps; and in a moment Valerio appeared, followed by his workmen, carrying a large basket-full of the materials for their mosaic fabric, and singing in a beautiful sonorous voice, without much respect for the holy place he was in, the burden of a love song.

But as soon as he saw his father he left off singing, and taking off his cap, advanced and saluted him, with the frankness and confidence of a soul which knows no wrong.

Zuccato was much impressed by his appearance, and his open and joyous expression. Valerio was the handsomest young man in Venice. He was not so tall, but stronger built, and more robust than his brother, At first sight, the only impression made by his beautiful countenance, was of its gaiety, frankness and courage. But after a little attention, the sacred fire of genius appeared, though it was sometimes obscured by the gay indifference of his character, and also in some degree, it must be confessed, by the fatigues of his pleasure-seeking life, which made him a little paler than was natural to him. This however formed but a variation of, and almost ennobled his extreme beauty, and moderated the fearless serenity of his look. He was always extremely particular in his toilette, and set the fashion to the proudest young nobles in Venice. He was much sought after by them, and ladies of the highest rank, on account of his great talent for designing embroidery, which was afterwards executed under *his direction,* in gold and silver, on the richest materials. *A velvet* cap ornamented with an arabesque

a la Valerio Zuccato, a fringe after his pattern, a cloth of gold mantle, the border embroidered in coloured silks, interlaced with chain-work, flowers, or foliage, after his Byzantine mosaics, were in the eyes of a high-born dame, or young "elegant," objects of the first necessity. This employment, at once a relaxation from his more serious labours and his pleasures, was extremely lucrative, and was carried on at his workshops of St. Philip, and St. James, with a certain mystery, into which however every body was benevolently initiated. His pleasing appearance, his fascinating manners, his acquaintance with the young nobles of the city, and the joyous spirits of the workmen who filled his workshop, naturally led him towards a life of pleasure, but his innate energy and extreme fidelity to his engagements preserved him from any excesses which would have ruined his genius.

The most tender and generous friendship united the two brothers; and, now by their joint entreaties they vanquished the feigned reluctance of old Zuccato to mount their scaffolding, and placing a ladder on each side of the one on which he ventured, they assisted him until he arrived safely at the last and highest stage. Tintoretto, who although already aged, was still hale and vigorous, and accustomed to use the large cupolas of the cathedral as his studio, followed them in order to witness the surprise of Sebastian.

The sentiment of religious awe which the old man had felt at first, gave way to involuntary delight, when placed at the proper height for the full effect, he saw the magnificent figures of the prophets and evangelists, and all the other *completed parts* of this vast and mar*vellous composition. Here* the Ascension of the

Virgin, after the design of Salviati; there the Resurrection of Lazarus, a fearful scene, where the corpse seemed actually about to detach itself from the brilliant surface of the wall, the St. Mark of Titian, a magnificent figure supported by the crescent moon, and whose heavenward flight seemed almost appreciable by the eye; the festoons of flowers round the circle sustained by lovely winged cherubims, and over all the Vision of St. John, where the condemned were seen precipitated into the flames of Hell, whilst the children of God, clothed in white garments, and mounted on white coursers, were lost in the softened yet brilliant beauty of the upper part of the cupola, like a nest of cygnets concealing themselves in the rosy mists of the morning.

At first Zuccato tried to resist the impression these performances made upon him, by attributing it to the effect of the varying, shifting light, to the favourable situation and imposing dimensions of the figures. But when Tintoretto obliged him to approach nearer, so as to appreciate the details, he was constrained to allow that he had never imagined the mosaic art susceptible of such perfection, and that the flying cherubim supporting the garlands might rival in form and colour the pictures of the greatest masters.

But miserly of his praise, and arguing against his own secret conviction, the old man insisted upon it that even now he could only see the merit of exactitude and patience; all the honour, said he, must return to the artist who traced the models for these groups, and designed the detail of these ornaments.

"*My* father," replied Francesco, with modest confidence, "*if you* would deign to examine the designs

you will, I think, at least accord us the praise of having displayed something more than the bare fidelity of copyists."

"For instance," said Tintoretto, "produce my designs for the Vision of the Apocalypse, and display that artistic skill, that painter's hand, which distinguishes Francesco and Valerio Zuccato from all other artists of their class."

Several of the designs were exhibited, and Sebastian might have convinced himself of the science with which the Zuccati had rendered the intentions of the artists, tracing themselves the pure and elegant form of their subjects, and creating their magnificence of colour from the simple sketch of the painter. Valerio, pressed by his brother, owned himself the author of many small figures; and then in his turn, speaking for Francesco, he showed his father the figures of two of the archangels flying towards each other, one of which in green drapery was his own work, and the other in turquoise blue garments, was the composition of Francesco himself, without the assistance of any painter.

Zuccato gazed at these two figures, which were really as beautiful as any of those for which a model had been furnished. Francesco had given the features of his brother to his archangel, whilst Valerio's archangel was the portrait of Francesco.

They had employed materials of extreme beauty in this cherished work, and had placed it modestly in an obscure angle, where no careless observer would descry it. Old Zuccato remained long silent and motionless before this winged pair, and confused at seeing the error of his life so gloriously refuted, was seized with

a terrible ill-humour. He descended the ladder coldly took his mantle from Valerio without deignin to utter a word of encouragement either to him or h brother, and hardly saluting Tintoretto himself, we with a firmer step than might have been expected fro his age towards the threshold of the cathedral. B hardly had he reached the first step, when yielding the yearning of his better nature he returned, open his arms to his children, and pressed them to h bosom, shedding tears upon their beautiful heads.

CHAPTER III.

"Huzza! Huzza! how fast the work gets on! Some Mastic here, you little black monkey! Maso! do you hear? Brother Vincent, what, in the devil's name, do you keep all the apprentices for? Send me one of your bearded seraphs there to help me a little. By Bacchus, if I throw my beetle at that great porpoise Maso, I am sure it will be a long time before the republic sees such an ugly figure again!"

So bawled out from the top of his scaffolding the red-bearded giant, who was directing the repairs of the chapel of St. Isidore, this part of the building being confided to Dominic Bianchini, nicknamed the Red, and his two brothers, competitors and rivals of the two Zuccati in the mosaic art.

"Will you hold your noise, you great bell? will you be patient you tower of red copper?" replied the surly Vincent Bianchini, the eldest of the three brothers. "Have not you got your own apprentices? Make them work, and leave mine alone. Haven't you got Jean Visentin, that pretty milk-cheese of the Alps? Where is Reazo gone?—your hoarse bull, who sings so well in the choir on Sundays. I dare say all your apprentices are running from tavern to tavern, trying to get credit for a bottle of wine in your name, and if so, they will not be back again in a hurry."

"Vincent," said Dominic, "it is well for you you are my *brother and my fellow* labourer, for with one

kick I could overturn your scaffolding, and send you illustrious self and your interesting apprentices to study mosaic on the pavement!"

"If you attempt it," cried Gian Antonio, the youngest of the three brothers, in a sharp voice shaking the ladder on which Dominic was working "I'll show you that the highest perch is not always the safest. Not that I care a bit more for Vincent's bones than for yours, but I don't like bullying, and for the last few days, mind you, you have taken up, sometimes with him, and sometimes with me, a tone I can't put up with."

The savage Dominic cast an angry glance at young Antonio, and allowed himself to be shaken on the ladder for some seconds without speaking. But as soon as Antonio was again occupied with his cement under the portico, he went down, threw off his cap and apron, turned up his sleeves, and began to inflict upon him a rough punishment.

The priest Alberto Zio, also a distinguished mosaist who was on a ladder pursuing his occupation, on one of the pediments, hastened down in order to separate the combatants, and Vincent Bianchini, running quickly from the interior of the chapel, beetle in hand mingled in the quarrel, more from resentment against Dominic than from any interest in Antonio.

The priest, having vainly endeavoured to bring them back to Christian feelings, at last used an argument to appease them which rarely failed of its effect.

"If the Zuccati hear you," said he, "they will rejoice at your quarrels, and think that it is their greater mildness and good understanding which makes their *work superior to yours.*"

"He's right," said Dominic the Red, taking up his apron; "we'll settle our quarrel in the evening at the tavern. Just now we must not give our enemies any advantage over us."

The two other Bianchini yielded to this advice, and whilst taking up their fresh cement upon their trowels, father Alberto entered into conversation with them: "You are wrong, my children," said he, "to regard the Zuccati as your enemies; they are your competitors, that is all. If they work upon different principles from yours, they still recognize the merit of your works. I have often heard their head apprentice, Bartolomeo Bozza, say that your cement was of a superior quality to theirs, and that the Zuccati willingly allowed it themselves."

"Oh, as for Bartolomeo Bozza," said Vincent Bianchini, "I say nothing against him, he is a good workman, and a good fellow enough. I would not object to getting him into my service. But don't talk of these Zuccati; there are no worse intriguers anywhere, and did their talent equal their ambition, they would soon crush all their rivals. Happily they are eaten up with indolence; the eldest wastes his time in imagining impossible subjects, and the youngest carries on a contraband trade at San Filippo, and spends the proceeds with people above his own rank."

"The star of the Zuccati may fall from the clouds some day though," said the envious Dominic, "notwithstanding all the protection the painters give them, if one thought it worth the trouble it would cost."

"How so," cried the two others, "if you know any means of humbling them, *tell* us, and we will forgive all your *wrongs towards us.*"

"I don't care more about you than them," sai Dominic, "only I know it would not be impossible t prove that they must apply their allowance in doin useless work, and thereby waste the revenues of th republic."

"You are uncharitable, Messer Dominic," said th priest, with severity. "If you speak in such a style c two men who are generally esteemed, you will give ris to the suspicion that you are prompted by jealousy."

"Well, and I am jealous," said Dominic, stampin his foot, "Why should not I be jealous? Is it not great injustice on the part of the Procurators to giv them a hundred gold ducats, whilst we have only thirt although we have been working ten years at the ge nealogical tree of the virgin. I am sure if the Zucca had worked all their lives, they would not have com pleted half so much. How many months does it tak them to do the skirt of a robe, or a child's hand. Jus watch them a little, and see what their fine work cost the republic."

"They do not work so fast as you do," said th priest, "but then what perfection of design! wha richness of colour!"

"If you were not a priest," retorted Vincent, shrug ing his shoulders, "you would be taught how t speak differently, you had better return to your con fessional and censer, and not try to judge of things yo know nothing at all about."

"Messer Vincent, what do you mean," cried th priest, a little offended." "You forget I knew th trade before you did, and that I was the favouri *pupil of* the master of us all, the ingenious Rizzo, th *worthy successor of* the old masters in gypso plastic.

may talk as much of ingenuity as you please,
hrist there's no great amount of imagination
n mosaic work. It only needs what you priests
othing Zuccati want, untiring arms, ribs, and
iron, precision, and activity. Attend to your
father Alberto, and leave us alone."
h," said Antonio, "there's that surley old
passing by. Look at his sons kissing his
nd attending him cap in hand. Would not
k it was the doge attended by his senators?"
savours of the Magnifico, and is rather too
oke. I think—."
ace," said Vincent, "here is Messer Robusti
to look at our work."
ree took off their caps more from respect for the
reputation, than from honour to his genius
ey were incapable of appreciating. Father
went to meet him, and took him into the
f St. Isidore. Tintoretto gave a look round
escoed pannels, praised the repairs of the an-
eek mosaics, which had been entrusted to the
nd retired, saluting the Bianchini without
to them, for he neither valued their produc-
esteemed their characters.

CHAPTER IV.

When the day's work was over, and the Zuccati had supped with their principal apprentices, Bozza, Marini and Ceccato, (who afterwards became excellent artists,) at a little tavern, where they were accustomed to meet when the occupations of the day were concluded; Valerio was going to look after his own affairs, either of business or pleasure, when he was stopped by his brother, who said to him:

"For once, dear Valerio, you must sacrifice a part of your evening to me. I always retire early, you know, and you will have plenty of time afterwards."

"Willingly," said Valerio, "but on condition that we take a gondola and row about a little, for I am worn out with the day's work, and must rest from one fatigue by another of a different character."

"I cannot help you to row," said Francesco, "for I have not your robust health, my dear Valerio, and as I must not incapacitate myself for to-morrow's labour, I must not over fatigue myself to-night, but if I refuse you this relaxation, I see I shall scarcely get the two or three hours of your company which I wish for; and therefore I will ask Bozza to join us, he is a worthy fellow, and will not be an intruder in the conversation."

Bartolomeo gladly accepted the offer, and having engaged one of the best looking gondolas, he took one *oar,* and Valerio the other. Standing at the two ex*tremities of the little* vessel, they made her bound over *the foaming waters.*

It was the hour when all the gay world of Venice was abroad on the Grand Canal, to enjoy the freshness of the evening. The little boat glided rapidly among the gondolas, like a wild sea-bird seeking refuge from the sportsman in the shelter of protecting sea-weed. But, notwithstanding the agility and silence of the rowers, all eyes were upon them; ladies bent forward on their cushions to get a longer look at the handsome Valerio, whose skill and grace excited envy in both patrician and gondolier, and whose appearance was a singular mixture of audacity and candour. Bozza, too, was a strong and well-made youth, although thin and pale. A dark fire burned in his black eyes, a thick beard covered half his face; but though his features were deficient in regularity, they drew attention by their sad and disdainful expression. Thin and pale, also, but noble, not arrogant, melancholy, not disdainful, Francesco Zuccato, lying on the black velvet cushion of the gondola, leaning negligently on his elbow, and plunged in a reverie too deep even to see the crowd, shared unconsciously the admiration of the ladies, which Valerio excited.

When they had reached the termination of the Grand Canal, they floated idly through the lagunes, far from the frequented parts, and keeping the shore on their lee, they lay down on the cushions, and talked at their ease beneath a heaven sparkling with unnumbered stars.

"My dear Valerio," said the elder Zuccato, "I am again going to annoy you with my remonstrances; but, indeed you must promise me to lead a wiser life."

"You can never annoy *me, my* beloved brother," said *Valerio, "and I am always* most grateful for your *solicitude; but I cannot promise* you to change. 'Tl

life I lead suits my fancy, I am as happy as a man can well be. Why do you, who love me so much, wish me to abstain from happiness?"

"This life will kill you," exclaimed Francesco. "It is impossible to withstand as you do at the same time, pleasure and fatigue, labour and dissipation."

"On the contrary, this kind of life animates and invigorates me," replied Valerio. "What is life, as it proceeds from the hand of God, but a continual alternation of enjoyment and privation, fatigue and activity? Let me alone, Francesco, and do not judge of my strength by yours. It is certainly one of Nature's inconsistencies not to have given the strongest constitution, or the greatest capacity for enjoyment, to the more estimable of our two characters; but you have so many other advantages over me, dear Francesco, that you need not envy me these."

"I do not envy them," said Francesco, "though they are the most precious of all, and the most necessary for our perfect appreciation of happiness. I delight in thinking that my brother who is dearer to m than myself, is free from the lassitude and *ennui* whic often devour me; but this is not the only point. Valeri you certainly care somewhat about your station, t friendship of illustrious artists, the protection of t Senate, the favour of the Procurators . . . ."

"I, brother!" cried the volatile young man, "exc the friendship of our dear Master Titian, and the ki ness of Robusti, two men whom I venerate dee except the love of my father and that of my bro whom I prefer to all the world, I care little for *thing else, and* I need nothing but a couple of b *of Scyros wine* to console me for the loss of m *and* the displeasure of the Senate."

"You care at least for honour," said Francesco, gravely, "for the honour of your father's name, and your own, for which I, myself, am guarantee."

"Certainly," exclaimed Valerio, hastily raising himself on his elbow, "but what can you mean?"

"To tell you that the Bianchini are conspiring against us, and that they may make us lose not merely the advantageous position and rich salary, which two bottles will so amply compensate you for, but the confidence of the Senate, and even the esteem of the citizens."

"Evohe!" exclaimed Valerio, "I should like to see that. Let us go to the Bianchini, if it be so, and give them a fair challenge. They are three, but our friend Bozza will make our third. Our's is a good cause; we will make a vow to the Madonna, and behold us delivered from these traitors."

"That is folly," said Francesco, "Divine power will not declare itself in favour of the aggressors, and such we should be, if we challenge men against whom at present we can prove no cause of offence. Besides, the Bianchini would but meet our offer of a fair fight, with the assassin's dagger.—They are dangerous adversaries, they will not offend us openly, whilst we are protected by powerful friends, and as soon as their hate is openly declared, our ruin is sealed. In fact I am already anxious,—Vincent, generally so polite towards me, already neglects the usual salutation when I pass his scaffolding. This very morning, whilst reconducting our father through the cathedral, I saw the Bianchini observing us maliciously, and turning us into ridicule. Their hatred, long concentrated in the depth of their hearts, *now shows itself in every* glance. Bozza can

tell you, that often, after the day's work is over, o
the morning, when he has chanced to arrive the fi
he has caught Dominic or Vincent Bianchini on
scaffolding, looking at the smallest details of our w
with the most scrupulous attention."

"All this does not prove much—if they do
salute you, it is because they are naturally rude; if t
looked malicious this morning, it was because t
envied us for having a good father; if they exam
our work, it is most likely they are endeavouring
discover the cause of our superiority. Are these moti
for disquietude?"

"Why then, instead of speaking to Bozza, as wo
be but natural when he meets them upon our scaff
ing, do they retire hastily by the opposite ladders
though they had just committed a bad action?"

"If I meet them there," cried Valerio, clenching
fist, "they had better give some explanation, or
Bacchus, I will make them descend a little quic
than they went up."

"That would only widen the breach. To reve
the one you had punished, the two others would p
sue you to the death. Believe me, the noblest me
are also the most polite. Let us be prudent and
tain the high position of honourable men. (
generosity may perhaps soften them, at any rate it
clearly prove them to be in the wrong, and if they p
secute us, we shall obtain justice."

"But brother, what persecution can they raise aga
us? What power have they to injure us? Can t
prove that we do not work better than they do?"

"They can say that we do not work so fast, *that is very easy* to prove."

we can prove that it is easy to work fast when
:s badly, and that no perfect work will brook
ıtion."

t is not so easy to prove. Between ourselves,
:urator-Cashier appointed for the examination
of art, is not much of an artist. He sees
in mosaic work, but an application of little
f coloured stones more or less brilliant. The
the colouring, the beauty of the design, or the
ı of the composition signify nothing to him.
sees what strikes the vulgar eye, the quick-
brilliancy of the work. Did I not vainly attempt
r day, to make him comprehend that the old
'gold crystal which had already been employed
ancestors in their works, and were slightly tar-
y time, were far more suitable to the colouring
se made at present? "You do very wrong,
Francesco," said he, "to yield all the newly gilt
› the Bianchini. The commissioners had de-
l that the old should be used mingled with the
l I cannot understand why you should have pre-
e old. If you think the mixture of the new and
d not produce a good effect, you are setting
up for a better judge than the commissioners
ves.'"

and you nearly made me laugh outright,"
ted Valerio, "when you replied to him, with
:rious air, 'Monsignor, I have no such insolent
on.'"

did I not vainly endeavour to show him,"
Francesco, "that the brilliancy of the new gold
the effect and spoiled the shading of all the
louring, which could only be thrown up by the

reddish tinge of the old gold, and that if I had chosen the new and brilliant pieces, I must have made my flesh-colours too purple and without roundness, and the robes without folds and without any shading?"

"He gave you," said Valerio, laughing, "a very unanswerable reason in a very dry manner. 'The Bianchini,' said he, 'do not give themselves half so much trouble, and their mosaics are far finer to the eye than yours.' After such a reason, why need you trouble yourself. Leave out the shading, leave out the roundness. Make the skirts of the robes out of one great mass of enamel, and cover St. Nicholas's stomach with it; make St. Cecilia a fine head of hair out of a badly baked tile, make St. John the Baptist's lamb out of a handful of quick lime, and the Procurators will double your salary, and the public will clap their hands. Pardieu! why should you, who think so much of fame, persist so obstinately in the worship of art?"

"I do think of fame, it is true," said Francesco, "but it is of a lasting fame, and not the vain popularity of the day. I would wish to leave an honoured, if not an illustrious name; and that those who see the cupola of St. Mark five hundred years hence should say—'This was the work of a conscientious artist!'"

"And what makes you think that the public will be more enlightened five hundred years hence than now?" said Bozza, in his hollow voice, breaking silence for the first time.

"There will always be great minds to revise and direct the popular judgment, and it is the great men of all times whom I wish to please. Is that an unworthy ambition, Valerio?"

"*It is a noble* ambition; but it is ambition, and all

ambition is a malady of the soul," replied the younger Zuccato.

"A malady," answered Francesco, "without which no great intellect could flourish, without which it must languish in the shade without enlightening the world. It is the wind which fans the spark, raises it to a flame, and extends it far and wide. Without this vivifying breeze there would be no warmth, no light, no life."

"I do not feel very death-like," cried Valerio, "and yet this breeze has never blown upon me. I feel the spark of life always glowing in my breast and in my brain. But provided that I am warmed by its divine glow, and that I feel the life within me, what does it matter to me, whether the light emanates from me or elsewhere? All light has one divine origin. What signifies the halo round a human head? Glory to uncreated genius! The glory of man is no more in himself than the sun is in the water which reflects his image."

"It may be so," replied Francesco, raising his large dark eyes full of tears towards heaven. "Perhaps it is but a folly and a vanity to think more of oneself, because, by having in thought approached the ideal, one has become capable of realizing the beautiful better than the common herd,—and yet, for what should man glorify himself, if not for that?"

"Why should man glorify himself at all? Provided he enjoys himself, is not that happiness sufficient?"

"And is not glory the most sensible, the most exciting, the most intense of man's enjoyments?" said Bozza, turning his glances towards Venice.

It was the *hour when the Queen* of the Adriatic, like

a beauty adorning herself with diamonds for a ball, began to display her many lights, and long garlands of fire were reflected in the tranquil waters, like jewels in an admiring mirror.

"You do not make a right use of words,' friend Bozza," said Valerio, disturbing the phosphorescent water with his oar, and scattering a shower of pale light round the black sides of the bark. "The most intense of human enjoyments is love; the most sensible is friendship; the most exciting is indeed glory; but, why say only exciting? Say rather, poignant, terrible, and dangerous."

"But may it not also be said that it is the most elevated?" said Francesco.

"I can never think so," replied Valerio, "that which is in itself sweetest and noblest in life, is to love; that is indeed to conceive, to feel the true ideal. We must, therefore, love everything which approaches it, seek it everywhere, take the nearest approach to it—"

"That is to say," answered Francesco, "embrace a phantom, seize a shadow, fix an illusion, and adore the spectre of one's own phantasy; is that what you term to enjoy, and to possess?"

"My brother," said Valerio, "if you were not sick at heart, you would not speak so. The man who whilst on earth desires a better life than this, must be either eaten up by pride or an ingrate who suffers. There is enjoyment for all who possess the spirit of love! Were there only friendship on the earth, man ought not to complain. Had I only you in the world, I should still bless heaven. I can imagine none better; and had God permitted me to create myself a brother, *I could not even* have imagined one more perfect than

Francesco. Ah! God himself is the only great artist, and what we ask from him in our wildest dreams, is not worth that which he gives us in his unchangeable wisdom."

"Ah! my dear Valerio," exclaimed Francesco, embracing his brother, "you are right, I am proud and ungrateful. You are worth us all, and are the living proof of the truth of your theory. Yes, I am, indeed, sick at heart! Cure me by your tenderness; you, whose soul is so strong and so pure. Holy Virgin! pray for me, I have, indeed, been culpable to have indulged melancholy with such a brother at my side."

"And yet," said Valerio, smiling, "the proverb says, no great artist is free from melancholy.'"

"Nor from hatred," said Bozza, gloomily.

"Oh, a proverb is always half false," said Valerio, "for every proverb having its opposite, says truth and falsehood at once. Francesco is a great artist, and yet I would wager soul and body that he has never known the feeling of hatred."

"Never towards others," said Francesco; "towards myself I have often, that is the evil effect of my pride. I am always pining because I am not better and more skilful than I am. I wish to be admired for my merits, and not because of my sufferings."

"You are and must be loved for both," exclaimed Valerio, "but it is possible that all men are not formed to be contented with affection alone. Perhaps, without the craving for admiration, there would be neither great artists nor *chef-d'œuvres*. The admiration of those otherwise indifferent to us, is a friendship which need not interest us much, and yet we find it indispensable; and the very *need felt for it* proves that it must serve *some great end in the designs of* God."

"It serves to make us suffer, and God is sovereignly unjust," said Bozza, throwing himself back in the gondola with a gesture of dispair.

"Do not say so," said Valerio. "Look, my dear comrade, how beautiful is the sea just under the horizon. Listen to the sweet sighing of that guitar. Have you no fair mistress? Bartolomeo, do you forget that we are your friends?"

"You are great artists," said Bozza, "and I am but an apprentice."

"Does that prevent our loving you?"

"It ought not to prevent your loving me, but it prevents me from loving you as I might do if I were your equal."

"Pardieu! if that were any reason," said Valerio, 'I should love scarcely any one, for I have but the mere title of an artist, and am in truth but an artisan. All those I most love and cherish are far above me, beginning with my brother, who is my master. My father was a good painter. Vecelli and Robusti each of them is a Colossus, before whom I am as nothing; nevertheless I love them, and never dream of repining at my own inferiority. Artists! artists, ye are all children of the same mother, and her name is Envy. More or less ye all share her qualities, and that consoles me for being nothing better than a scapegrace."

"Say not so, Valerio," said the elder brother; "if you deigned to take more trouble you would be the first mosaist of the age, your name would efface that of Rizzo himself, and my name would be after yours."

"For which I should be very sorry. No, by St. Theodosius, may you always be first. Sacred indolence! *preserve me from* such a fatiguing honour!"

"Do not utter such blasphemy, Valerio; art ought to be above all other interests!"

"Whoever loves art loves glory," said Bozza, with his deep voice, always sad and lugubrious as the sound of a deep bell in the midst of a joyous strain, "and whoever loves glory is ready to sacrifice everything to it."

"Many thanks! as for me, I will never sacrifice anything to it. Away with the harlot! And yet I love art, you know it well, although they say I care for nothing but love and wine. I must love it well, or I should not sacrifice to it half of a life which I feel vigour enough to devote entirely to pleasure. I am never happier than when at work. If I succeed I could throw my cap over the tower of St. Mark. If I fail, I am not discouraged; and even the species of anger I feel against myself, is yet a pleasure of the same kind as one feels in a restive horse, a stormy sea, or a fiery wine. But the approbation of others does not stimulate me more than a reverence from the Bianchini. When Francesco, my other self, says, 'that is well done,' I am satisfied. When my father, whilst looking at my archangel, smiled in spite of himself, though frowning at the same time, I was happy. And if the Procurator does say that Dominic the Red works better than I do, so much the worse for the Procurator! but I shall not carry my compassion to the point of shedding tears. If the good people of Venice find that I do not put enough brick-red in my flesh colour, nor enough ochre in my draperies, all hail to their dictum! If you were not so foolish I could not laugh so much at you, and that would be a pity, for I laugh with my whole heart."

"*Happy, thrice happy indifference!*" said Francesco.

Whilst thus conversing they approached the city. When they were near the shore, "Before I quit you," said Valerio, "we must understand each other. Of what do you complain? What is it you require of me? That I should cease to divert myself? You may as well try to hinder water from flowing?"

"That you should divert yourself with less publicity," replied Francesco, "and that you should renounce for some time, at least, your workshop at San Filippo. These circumstances may be interpreted unfavourably. People are already asking how so many arabesque designs, and so many other occupations can be compatible with the necessary quantity of labour in the cathedral. Did I not know your indefatigable activity, I could not understand it myself; and if I did not see your works advance, I could not believe that two or three hours' sleep, after nights of pleasure and gaiety, would suffice a workman confined all day at a laborious occupation. Prevent your numerous acquaintances, and above all, those gossipping young patricians, from coming to visit you so frequently at the cathedral. Such an honour wounds the self-love of the Bianchini they say these young people make you waste your time; that they take you from your labour to attend to trifles; for instance, that joyous brotherhood which you are just going to institute, and which is agitating all the tradesmen in the city."

"Alas!" cried Valerio, "it is precisely for that I am in such a hurry to quit you this evening: they are waiting for me to regulate the costume. I cannot draw back, and you promised on your honour, Francesco, to be of the party."

"*I promised* on condition that the affair did not

take place until after St. Mark, when I hope my cupola will be finished."

"I mentioned that both for you and myself; but you may imagine that two or three hundred young men, anxious for pleasure, will not willingly listen to the reasons of one who is only eager for work. They declared that if we refused to join them immediately, the association must break up; that nothing could be done without me, and then they reproached me, saying that I had led them on, that expenses had been entered into, and the fete announced, and that such a long delay would give all the other clubs a triumph over them. In a word, they said so much, that I engaged both for you and myself to inaugurate the banner of the Lizard in a fortnight. We are to commence by running at the ring, and then we are to have a magnificent repast, where each member will be expected to introduce a young and beautiful lady."

"But do you not think these follies will retard your work?"

"All hail to Folly! but I defy her to prevent my working when work-time comes. There is a time for everything, brother, so I must count upon you?"

"You may inscribe my name, and I will send my subscription by you, but I cannot go to the fete. It must not be said that the two Zuccati amuse themselves at once. It must be seen that while one diverts himself, the other works for two."

"Dear brother," cried Valerio, embracing him, "I will work for four the evening before, and you must come to the festival. It will be a superb fete, and for a noble end; entirely plebeian and brotherly. It shall no longer *be said that the* Patricians alone have the

right of amusing themselves, and that workmen can only get up clubs of devotees. No, no, the artisan is not always to be doing penance. The rich fancy that we are born for nothing but to expiate their sins. And you, Bartolomeo, you must be one of us; I shall inscribe your name; it will cost you a little expense, but if you have not money now, I have, and I will manage everything. Adieu, dear friends, till to-morrow. Dear brother, you must not say I do not listen to your advice, with all the respect due to one's elder. Now, confess you are contented with me?"

As he spoke, Valerio leaped lightly on to the shore by the ducal palace, and disappeared under the changing shadows of the colonade.

CHAPTER V.

The same evening Bozza, returning from a visit to his mistress, more sad, more gloomy than ever, tired of love, of labour, and of life, was walking quickly along the solitary shore. A high wind had risen, the waves beat against the marble quays, and mysterious voices seemed murmuring words of hatred and malediction under the dark arcades of the old palace.

Suddenly he found himself in front of a man, whose heavy and resounding steps had not before been able to rouse him from his reverie. By the light of a lantern attached to one of the mooring timbers, Bozza and the other nocturnal promenader recognised each other, and stopping face to face, they measured each other from head to foot; Bartolomeo thinking the man might have some bad design, put his hand upon his dagger, but contrary to his expectations, Vincent Bianchini (for it was he) lifted his cap, and accosted him with courtesy.

Vincent, like his brother Dominic, was a vulgar companion and a bad man. Less brutal in appearance, and capable, notwithstanding his want of education, of assuming tolerable manners, profoundly cunning, and hardened in lying by the many infamous examinations he had suffered before the Council of Ten; he was certainly the most dangerous of the three Bianchini.

"Messer Bartolomeo," said he, "I have just come from a *place, where I had expected* to meet you, but

where I am very glad you had not, as I had, the c
osity to slip in unperceived."

"I do not know what you wish to say, Me
Vincenzo," replied Bozza, with a slight bow, en
vouring to pass by.

Vincent measured his pace by Bozza's, without se
ing to perceive the desire which the other showe
avoiding him.

"You know without doubt," said he, "that
principal members of the new association have l
assembled to deliberate upon its laws and admiss
to membership."

"It is very possible," replied Bartolomeo, "
that matters little to me, Messer Bianchini, I am
a man of pleasure."

"But you are a man of honour, and that is
eason why I rejoice not to have seen you amongst
auditors of this momentous deliberation."

"What do you mean?" cried Bozza, stopping.

"I mean to say, brave Bartolomeo," replied Vinc
"that had you been there, things would have l
differently managed; and, perhaps, there would l
been some little noise about it. But, perhaps i
better as it is, for such a trifling affair is not worth

"Stop! speak plainly, Messer, I beg of you,"
terrupted Bozza, impatiently; "did anything
touching my honour?"

"Why, not personally, perhaps; but it was rathe
universal affront, of which you have your share.
is what occurred. You know the new company is be
formed after the example of the others, of meml
chosen from different corporations, which rival e
other in riches and talent. Into this one in partic

intended to receive all those workers in glass
riches and love of pleasure would induce them
ı to join. Architects, and glass blowers, founders,
›saic workers; in short, all trades who are con-
in the repairs of the cathedral were to furnish
andidates. That point settled, it remained to
r the names of these candidates; and the origi-
having at their head your master, Valerio
o, met together for this purpose. But would
lieve that this artist, so celebrated for his agree-
anners and popularity, has shewn himself full of
ı and haughtiness towards most of the proposed
ions. Yes, truly, he refused admission to gentle-
ıd senator, declaring that whoever had not taken
ıtership in some profession or other, was not
' of being admitted into this club. Many ob-
s were raised; and many even ventured to say
›me apprentices had more economy and talent,
›nsequently more money and more merit than
masters; but to this he would not even listen;
: expressed himself in terms so vain and so harsh,
e affronted every one. Just then I happened to
r him without his seeing me, and some one said
ı, 'But if you succeed in this, shall not you
the exclusion of Bozza, that good comrade who
so well, with such a good character, and so much
ment for you and your brother.' 'If my appren-
replied Messer Valerio, 'is admitted into the
ıny, I shall retire.' But nevertheless the majority
d it. Apprentices are to be admitted, provided
are considered by the assembly worthy of soon
g up mastership in their respective professions."
tza did *not answer, but* Vincent Bianchini, who

observed him closely, saw by his agitated ste the contraction of his arms beneath his mantl he was violently mortified.

Nevertheless he contained himself, for he give absolute credence to the words of Bianchi seeing that he must not let the wound close, sai indifferent manner, "It is a pity after all that young man, otherwise amiable and well-di should be so puffed up with vanity. His frequ tercourse with the Patricians must be the cau It is injurious to an artist to associate with above his own."

"There is no class above the artist," repl young apprentice, with some asperity; "if esteems anything more than his art, he is not of the title he bears."

"This foolish vanity," replied Bianchini, family disease. Sebastian Zuccato despises his c because he is a painter, and they are mosaists. cesco, the eldest son, who is the first master in despises his brother because he is only the master, and he despises his apprentice . . . ."

"Do not say he despises me, Messer," said in a hollow voice. "He dares not! Say not am a despised man, or by Christ I will teach contrary!"

"Being despised by a fool," rejoined Bianch the calmness of hypocrisy, "would only red your credit. There are some people whose e an insult!"

"But that is not the case between Valerio a *replied Bozza,* endeavouring to struggle aga *vipers which* were gnawing his heart.

"I hope not," replied Vincent; "but yet I cannot imagine what it was he said to the person who first mentioned your name, for he whispered in his ear, and I could only judge what it was about from the manner in which he drew down his cap over his eyes, and pulled his cloak collar up to his ears, in order to mimick you. He frowned and imitated your gesture, which made the confidant of his foolish jests almost die with laughter."

"And pray, who was it that dared to laugh?" cried Bozza, pulling, in spite of himself, his cap down upon his brows, clenching his fist, and striking his breast, the very gesture which according to Bianchini, Valerio had been turning into ridicule.

"Faith, I can't tell you," replied Vincent. "I could not see his face, because, according to his custom, Valerio had assembled a numerous auditory round him, greedy of his sallies. When I succeeded in passing through the crowd, Valerio had changed his listener, and was speaking of something else, but they were still laughing in the place he had quitted."

"It is well, Messer Vincent," replied the young man, deeply wounded. "I am obliged to you for having told me this; perhaps I shall find an opportunity of recompensing you."

Speaking thus, Bozza hastened his steps, and Bianchini followed with his eyes, his black plume agitated by the wind. After losing sight of him, and applauding himself for having pierced the cuirass at the first blow, he remained for a long time immovable upon the shore, absorbed in thoughts full of hatred and perversity.

CHAPTER VI.

The sun had hardly gilded the summits of the white cupolas of St. Mark, and the gondoliers of the Grand Canal were yet sleeping on its shore by the Leonine column, when the cathedral was already filled with workmen. The apprentices arriving first, raised the ladders, selected the enamels, mixed the cement, singing, whistling, and chatting, in spite of the grief and indignation of Father Alberto, who in vain tried to make the thoughtless young men recollect the sanctity of the place, and the presence of the Lord.

But if the exhortations of the priestly mosaist were not productive of much effect in the grand cupola, where the school of the Zuccati pursued their labours, at any rate he might satisfy his zeal, and quiet his conscience by long and severe reprimands. Never was he interrupted by gross language or insulting laughter, for if these pupils partook of the gaiety, ardour, and vivacity of their Master Valerio, they shared also his kindness and respect for old age and virtue.

But things passed very differently in the chapel of St. Isidore, where the Bianchini family, surrounded by fierce undisciplined apprentices, could scarcely maintain order by furious bellowings and frightful menaces. When an obscene song reached the ears of Alberto, he could do nothing but cross himself, and his grief found vent in stifled exclamations and profound sighs. *But when,* towering above all the low conversations *and brutal* invectives which the apprentices bandied

about, the terrible voice of Dominic the Red came thundering through the echoing arches of the cathedral, the poor priest was often obliged to stop his ear with one hand, and hold himself steady on his ladder with the other, to avoid falling. This morning the masters themselves arrived very early, and commenced their labours almost as soon as the apprentices. St. Mark's day was approaching, when the consecration of the cathedral was to be solemnized, as it had been entirely renovated, and ornamented with fresh pictures by the first masters of the age. Judgment was now to be passed on all its decorations, after ten, sixteen, or twenty years of assiduous labour, without favour and without prejudice. It was to be an important day for all concerned, from the first painter to the mere journeyman; from the architect himself, with his sublime calculations, to the untaught labourer who cut the stones and mixed the mortar. Emulation, jealousy, joyous expectation, or sinister fear, every good and bad passion, with which in all arts and trades men are inspired by the thirst of glory and of gold, raged unceasingly in those aisles echoing with a thousand sounds. Here an oath, there a joyous song; further off a quolibet; above, the hammer; beneath, the trowel; one while the hollow noise of the tools on the mosaic, and then the clear and glassy sound of the crystals falling from the basket upon the pavement like little streams of rubies and emeralds; now the frightful noise of the scraper on the cornice; and now the sharp and piercing sound of the saw cutting the marble, not to mention the nasal intonation of the masses repeating in the various chapels, in spite of all the confusion; *the ticking of the* clock, the heavy *vibration of the bells, and the cries of* various domestic

animals, imitated by the younger apprentices to such perfection, as to induce Father Alberto, who was always duped by this *ruse*, to turn his head away from his labour, which he never resumed without crossing himself, in expiation of what he was pleased to call his levity of spirit.

If the disciples of the Zuccati were milder and more innocent in their diversions than those of the Bianchini, they were hardly less noisy. Francesco rarely imposed silence on them. Absorbed in his occupation, the patient and melancholy artist was quite deaf to all the tumult of his noisy workshop; and provided that the work went on well, he never opposed a gaiety which delighted Valerio, and stimulated his ardour. Valerio was, in fact, the idol of his apprentices. Although he was continually spurring them on, and often in pretended anger, rallied them with facetious criticism; in reality, he loved them like his children, and charmed away all their fatigues by his continual vivacity. Every day he had some new and grotesque story to tell them, every day he had a new song more amusing than the last. Did one of them make a mistake, and endeavour to deny it through self-love, or defend it through obstinacy and ignorance, he made merriment at his expense, and sometimes daubed his face with his paint brush. But if an attentive pupil was sincerely sorry, or secretly blushed for an involuntary error, Valerio went to him, took his tools, and in a few minutes repaired the fault, encouraging him by kind words, or by keeping silence, that the mortified apprentice might not have the remarks of his comrades drawn down upon him. It may *be truly said*, that if Francesco was loved and respected, *Valerio was* adored, and that his apprentices would

have thrown themselves from the tower of St.
for his sake.

olomeo Bozza, always cold and silent, was the
ne who shared neither in this enjoyment nor
iasm. Francesco set great store by his work,
was always regular and solid, and on the correct-
f his manners. His melancholy appeared a
or sympathy, and he felt pleasure in fancying
is gloomy and mysterious youth concealed the
of a great artist. As for Valerio, although he
little that was agreeable in Bozza, yet his own
tion was kind enough to make him imagine in
er all the good qualities which he had himself.

ough Bozza was usually at his work even before
er apprentices, this morning he was more than
r after sunrise. He was more pale and wan
ual, more silent and gloomy than they had ever
him.

ad not had a moment's sleep. All night he had
ed like a spectre through the dark and crooked
, his hair hung straight over his hollow cheeks,
rd was in disorder, and the plume of his cap
oken by the winds. He took in silence his
nd his tools, and his place near Valerio, who
work on the festoon of his arch. Francesco had
the tardy arrival of his apprentice, but Bozza
ually so exact, that the master avoided mak-
y observation upon this fault, the first he had
tted during the three years of his apprentice-

erio, always communicative, and prompted by
olicitude, did not *fear to question* him.

hat is the matter comrade?" said he, surveying

him from head to foot with astonishment; "you look just as though you had been buried alive last night. Give me your hand, that I may know it is you, and not your ghost." Bozza pretended not to hear, and did not reply to this appeal of the friendly outstretched hand.

"Have you been gambling, Bartolomeo? Were you unlucky last night? Is it that which saddens you? Come, you must not mind it; as for money, do not think of that, you know my purse is yours."

Bozza did not reply.

"Ah well! perhaps it is not that; your mistress has deceived you, or you have ceased to love her, which is still worse. Never mind, you must make a beautiful Madonna, who shall resemble her, and whose kind looks will be eternally fixed on you. Perhaps you have an enemy, do you wish me to be your second in a duel, I am ready."

"A great number of questions, truly, Messer Valerio," replied Bozza, in a low smothered yet bitter tone, "Is it come to such a point, that for an hour's delay, your apprentices must suffer a regular cross-examination, and render an account of their conduct?"

"Oh!" cried Valerio, quite astonished, "you are in an ill-temper, my poor friend; I hope by and bye, when the fit is over, you will do more justice to my intentions." He went on with his labour, whistling, and Bozza commenced his with a delay and affectation of nonchalance, which Valerio would not gratify him by observing.

When two hours had passed, and Bozza saw that he *had not* succeeded in irritating Valerio, he changed

CHAPTER VII.

However gross were the artifices which Vincent Bianchini employed, the spirit of observation with which he was gifted by nature, and the perfect knowledge which he had of the follies and weaknesses of men, often served him better than the superior talents of others. He had a profound and irrevocable contempt for human nature. Denying the power of conscience, he hated mankind; no degree of corruption startled him, and a feeling of simple goodness never entered into his calculations. It is true that his unfavourable opinions were often justified, but it is equally true that as the storm-wind only breaks the tree whose sap no longer flows, and whose stalk has lost its vigour, so the wicked suggestions of Bianchini only triumphed over hearts where the sentiment of benevolence, the sap of life, flowed sparingly, and was interrupted in its course by the violence of contending passions. A feeling of cowardice prevented him from openly attacking the noble and generous. He was only acquainted with the dark side of human nature, and this mournful knowledge rendered him even rash in the exercise of his duplicity. His very daring to improvise so gross a lie, proved that he foresaw, that Bozza, by nature self-absorbed and distrustful, would never seek for an explanation. Bozza, without feeling the slightest love for deceit, hated frankness—His greatest tor*ment was his enormous* self-love, eternally *being mortified, and eternally* suffering. Bianchini

well knew that every effort of his will was concentrated to conceal this weakness, and that the fear of betraying it, was what kept him taciturn, and incapable of all expansion in answering to any explanation which would have obliged him to lay bare any part of his secret soul. If he ever partially unbosomed himself to Francesco, it was because observing his melancholy and fancying it arose from the same cause as his own, he mistrusted him less than any one else: but he was quite deceived, the melancholy under which Francesco laboured, although showing the same symptoms, was of quite another character. As for Valerio, not being able to understand him, Bozza took refuge in decoying him. He was persuaded that his happy indifference was a perpetual affectation assumed in order to gain friends and partisans, and to get on by the favour of the great and it was this error which had caused Bianchini's *ruse* to succeed.

When Bozza found himself in the presence of Valerio, although not in the least cowardly, his courage vanished. The very wish he felt to reproach him, with his imagined conduct of the evening before, yielded to the fear of showing how much his pride was wounded at such a puerile offence; he felt that true dignity required him to despise or to seem to despise it, and suddenly repressing his anger outwardly, he reassumed his cold and disdainful air.

Valerio, much astonished at the sudden change in his attitude and physiognomy, broke silence first, by asking what he wished to say to him.

"I wish to say, Messer," replied Bozza, "that you must seek another apprentice: I quit your school."

"*Because?*" asked Valerio, with the impatience of *a frank disposition.*

"Because I feel a wish to quit it," replied Bozza; "ask me no more."

"And by informing me thus abruptly," demanded Valerio, "do you wish to wound me?"

"Not at all, Messer," replied Bozza, coldly.

"In that case," replied Valerio, exercising great control over his indignation, "you owe it to the friendship which I have always testified for you, to inform me of the reasons for your departure."

"There is no question about friendship here, Messer," said Bozza, with a bitter smile; "that is a thing not to be lavished, and a sentiment which cannot exist between you and me."

"Possibly you have never felt it for any one," said Valerio, much hurt, "but I felt it sincerely for you, and have given too many proofs of it for you to deny them."

"Yes, you have indeed given me proofs," returned Bozza, ironically, "which it will be difficult for me to forget."

Valerio, quite astonished, looked at him fixedly; he could hardly believe in so much bitterness, and did not wish hastily to believe it the language of hatred.

"Bartolomeo," said he, hastily, "seizing his arm and drawing him into the galleries, "you have something on your mind, I must have given you offence involuntarily; if such is the case, I swear upon my honour that it was quite unintentional; and that I may prove my words, tell me what it is."

There was so much frankness in the accent of the young man, that the apprentice thought that it was possible Bianchini *might have* been playing on his *credulity; but at the same time* he felt more than ever

the need of concealing his extravagant susceptibility, and the sentiment of his own weakness made the generous sincerity of Valerio more humiliating to him. His heart, closed to affection, felt no yearning to reply to these advances. "If Bianchini has lied to me," thought he, "if Valerio did not despise me this time he has despised me every day of his life, and he must despise me even now whilst offering his protecting friendship, and the pardon of a fault. Since I have so far spoken out, I must persist." For some time Bozza had disliked his association with the Zuccati, and resolved to break it.

"You have never offended me, Messer," replied he coldly. "Had you done so, I should not merely quit you, I should demand satisfaction."

"And I am ready to give it, if you persist in thinking so," said Valerio, who could not help being aware of the dissimulation of his pupil.

"There is no need of that, Messer; and to prove that if I do not seek a quarrel, it is not from any timidity, I will give you a reason for my departure, which may very probably displease you a little."

"Say on," said Valerio, "the truth should always be told."

"It is then, Messer," said Bozza, in the most pedantic and contemptuous tone he could assume, "a question of art, and nothing more. Possibly this may make you smile, you who despise art, but I, who care for nothing else in the world, I must own to you that I am a man who would sacrifice the most agreeable connections to my desire of improvement, and of speedily becoming a master.

"*I do not blame* that," said Valerio, "but how am

I any bar to your progress? Have I neglected to instruct you, and instead of employing you, as other masters would have done, in mere journeyman's work, have I not always treated you as an artist. Have I not furnished you with all possible means of progress, by confiding to you important and difficult works, and showing you the best methods, as though you had been my own brother?"

"I do not deny your complaisance," replied Bozza, "but though you may think me vain, I must confess to you, Messer, that the methods which to you seem the best, do not satisfy me at all. I do not only aspire to be the first in my art, but also to introduce into this art itself, as yet imperfect, a progress for the accomplishment of which I feel myself inspired. Permit me, therefore, to free myself from your system, and to follow my own. A voice within me commands me to do so. It appears to me that I am destined for something higher than to follow in the steps of any one. If I fail, do not regret me, if I succeed, you may depend upon my aid and my counsels."

Valerio, who was too entirely destitute of vanity to feel that this speech was composed solely in the hope of mortifying him, repressed the great desire he felt to laugh. He had often perceived Bozza's extravagant self-love, and now he thought he must be under the influence of some delirious fantasy. This seemed to explain the agitation he had seen in him all the morning, and remembering how much suffering such a feeling brought with it, he was generous enough not to rally him openly. "But even then, my dear Bartolomeo," said *he smiling*, "it seems to me that *you would be much more able* to improve us, and that

we should be in a better position for receiving your counsels, were you still to remain with us. As you are never interfered with in your work, nothing can prevent you from innovating and perfecting it at your leisure. If you cause our art to progress, I can safely promise that, far from hindering you, I shall be most happy to profit by it on my own account.

Bozza could not help feeling that in spite of his complaisance, Valerio was rather mocking him. Vexed at having wished to be provoking, and only having been ridiculous, he lost all control over himself, and kept replying so sharply, that at last Valerio lost all patience, and ended by saying, "Indeed, my dear friend, if that fine performance of yours this morning was the revelation of your genius, I should prefer art to retrograde in my hands, rather than to make such progress in yours."

"It is quite evident, Messer," said Bozza, "irritated at seeing all his petty vengeance recoil upon himself, "that you were not duped by the pretexts which I thought of this morning as a cause for our separation. I wished to displease you, merely that I might be dismissed, and thus spare you the mortification of being quitted. I am sorry that you have not appreciated this generosity, and that you force me to say openly that I will not remain another hour in your school."

"And the true reason of your departure remains impenetrable?" asked Valerio.

"No one has any right to ask it," replied Bozza.

"I might force you to fulfil your engagement," said Valerio, "for your agreement was to labour under my direction until the ensuing St. Mark's day, but I do *not choose to be served* by constraint—Be free."

n ready, Messer," said Bozza, "to offer you any
ity you require, and I fear nothing so much
ining your debtor."
ı must however resign yourself to it, said Va-
turning his parting salutation, for I am not
sposed to accept anything from you."
the master and apprentice parted. Valerio
him depart, and traversed the galleries in
itation, and then suddenly struck with sorrow
ıought of so much coldness and ingratitude, he
l to his labour, his face bathed in tears.
ı, on the contrary, went to visit his mistress,
ı kinder to her than usual. He felt quite light-
, almost gay. His heart seemed freed from a
ɔad, the obligation of gratitude, always insup-
ː to the proud. He felt as though about to
. over all the past, and to enter with flying
upon the glorious independence of the future.

Bozza set little value on the private lessons of dra
and painting which the Zuccati gave him in their lei
hours. He thought nothing more important in
world than the care of his future glory, and secr
reproached Valerio for that love of pleasure w
hindered all his spare moments from being dedic
to his improvement, and blamed Francesco for pu
ing serious studies on his own account, which s
times forced him to abridge his lesson or to put
to the next day. He persuaded himself that
masters, fearing to be surpassed by him, deprived
of the means of rapid instruction, that they might
fit longer by his work; and he gave himself up i
secret soul to all the misery of suspicion and re
ment. At other times, and these instants wer
more cruel, he opened his eyes to conviction, and
ceived that, notwithstanding the excellent lessons
the disinterested counsel given to him, he did not
the progress which he ought to have made; he
bitterly all the defects of his work, and asked hi
fearfully whether, allowing for a certain portio
talent, he was not doomed to be for ever powerles

He understood what was wanting in him, but
not realize it. His hands always seemed to tra
into the vulgar tongue, the lyrical aspirations
brain; and he almost believed in the jealous int
ence of infernal powers over his destiny. Valeri
often said to him, "The greatest obstacle to the dev
ment of your faculties is the inquietude to whic
give yourself up. Nothing grand or beautifu
bloom without the fertilizing breath of a warm
and a free spirit. Health of body and soul are
necessary to produce a healthy work, and that

emanates from a sick brain has not the vitality of life. If instead of spending your nights dreaming of the delights of fame, you were to pass them happily with your beloved one; if instead of shedding the withering tears of *ennui*, you wept with tenderness and sympathy on the bosom of a friend; if in those hours when fatigue prevented you from working or discerning colours, instead of fatiguing your sight and wasting your energy, you would seek in the amusements of your age and the innocent pursuits of youth, a means of renewing the strength of the artist by giving it another direction for some time, I think you would be surprised on your return to work, to find your heart beat strongly, and all your being transported with an unknown joy and a victorious hope. But you contrive to be always sad, always sinking under the burden of existence; how then can you expect to give to your work that vitality which is not in yourself? If you continue thus, all the resources of your genius will be destroyed before you have made use of them. By eternally contemplating the end and exaggerating the prize of the victory, you will forget the sweet sensations and the pure joys of the production. Art, in revenge for not having been loved for its own sake, will only reveal itself afar to your dazzled and deceived eyes; and if you happen by extravagancies to obtain the empty applause of the crowd, you will not feel in yourself the generous satisfaction of the conscientious artist; who smilingly contemplates the ignorance of his judges, and who consoles himself for his poverty provided he may shut himself up in a garret or a dungeon with his muse, *and enjoy with her* delights unknown *to the vulgar.*" *The unhappy artist* felt the truth of

these observations deeply, but instead of s
Valerio uttered them in the simplicity of hi
with a sincere desire to put him into a goo
he attributed to him the unholy sentiment
joy, and a cruel contempt at the sight of his
Discouraged and desperate, he exclaimed
but too true, Valerio, I am lost; I am
as a torch blown about by the winds bef
cast my lustre or furnished my light.
it well, and you do but probe the wo
know the secret of your strength, and of
ness. Triumph, then; humble me, despise
ings, destroy my hopes, ridicule even my de
have known how to employ your energy,
guided the courser, you have conquered h
excite him unceasingly, and carried away
shall be overcome by the first obstacle."

In vain did the two Zuccati endeavour
him and renew his hope; he repulsed their
and mortified by their compassion, concea
happiness far from all regard and all consol
ing that their friendly counsels served but
the suffering of his irritated spirit, the
masters had gradually ceased to speak to hi
self; Bozza concluded therefrom that the
no longer, and that they were afraid of h
too much by their good advice. The unha
sity of abandoning a noble and interesti
finish by a given time trifling ornaments, l
finishing stroke to his anger. He had com
solution of quitting them as soon as his
had expired, for he no longer hoped that
propose him for the mastership, as they

to do at the end of their engagement with the Procurators. This privilege was only extended to one pupil in the year; and his young companions, Ceccato or Marini, seemed to him to be more higher estimated by the Zuccati than himself. He thought of going to Ferrara or to Bologna to propose himself as a master, and to form a school; for though one of the last at Venice, he might hope to be one of the first in a city less rich and less illustrious. His quarrel with Valerio had in his eyes, therefore, the double advantage of restoring him to liberty, and giving him the opportunity of revenge. The works were not yet completed; St. Mark's day was approaching; every instant was being counted. Both schools redoubled their ardour not to be behindhand with their engagements. The absence or the departure of an apprentice was at this time a real loss, and seriously endangered the success of the unheard of efforts which had been made up to this time, not to be surpassed by the rival school.

CHAPTER IX.

It was not long before the Bianchini perceived the absence of Bozza, and the melancholy of Valerio. Vincent related his artifice of the previous evening to his two brothers with a brutal laugh; and all three encouraged by this first success, resolved to neglect nothing which might hinder the completion of the works in the great cupola, and thereby ruin the Zuccati. After holding a tavern consolation therefore, Vincent sought for traces of Bozza, and found him towards night in those great orchards which extend along the Lagunes in the suburb of St. Clara. Bozza was slowly walking by the side of a green hedge intermingled with fruit trees, which drooped caressingly over the calm waters. Profound silence reigned over this leafy city, and the last tints of evening were fading slowly over the rustic steeple of the island of Certosa. On this side the *physiognomy* of Venice is at once as *naive* and pastoral as it is coquetish, proud, or terrible in other situations. Nothing touches there but boats full of herbs or fruit; there is no noise but that of the gardener's rake, the spinning wheel of the women sitting in the midst of their children round the hothouses, or the convent clocks sounding the hours with clear and almost woman-like tone, with nothing to interrupt their long and melancholy vibration. There, in other days, came Childe Harold, seeking an explanation of those secrets of nature, grace, mild*ness, charm, repose*; mysterious words, which nature,

ss or pitiless for him, translated into languor, , *ennui*, despair. There Bozza, insensible to ıign influences of the delicious evening, was ıg the rapid flight and desperate combats of the a-birds, who every evening disputed for their ınce of prey, or hastened to arrive at their aunts. This spectacle of combat and inquietude only one in which he felt any sympathy. Every he conquered seemed to him a personification ivals; and when the conqueror screamed forth of rage and triumph, he could have imagined rising on those vast pinions towards the object ıatiable desires.

chini accosted him first with a great affectation ness, and after telling him that for some time perceived the evil intentions of the Zuccati to- im, begged to know, under the seal of secresy, r he had definitively made up his mind to quit hool.

ere needs no secresy on the point," said Barto- "it is not only a thing resolved upon, but a one."

chini expressed his pleasure with some reserve, ured Bozza that he might have stopped ten ith the Zuccati without the least chance of a hip, and cited the example of Marini, who oung man of talent, and had worked with them years, with no other recompense than a modest and the title of "companion." "Marini flatters ," said he, "that he will become a 'master' next St. Mark, according to the promise of Francesco Zuccato, *but*—"

' he promise him positively?" said Bozza, his *kling.*

"In my presence," said Vincent. "Perhaps they promised you the same thing. Oh! promises cost nothing to the Zuccati; they treat their apprentices as they treat the Procurators, with more words than deeds. They have plenty of fine speeches to explain to their dupes, that art demands a long noviciate; that it ruins an artist, even in his prime, to deliver him to the caprices of his own imagination; that the greatest talents often fail by being too soon freed from the servile copy of models, etc. In fact, what will they not say? They learned by heart in their father's studio, when he had a studio, five or six wise sayings, which they had heard from Titian or Giorgione, and now they fancy themselves masters in painting, and speak like oracles. Really it is so ridiculous, that I cannot help wondering how your great Devil in the Apocalypse, that *morceau* so perfect in itself, so comically treated, so well horned, and so good humoured, that I can never look at him without laughing, does not detach himself from the wall, and give them with his lion's tail a good box on the ears when they preach doctrines so ridiculous, and so out of place in their mouths—"

Although Bozza was mortified by this vulgar praise bestowed upon his 'choicest *morceau*,' a figure which he had designed to render terrible and not grotesque, yet he felt a secret joy to hear the Zuccati ridiculed and deprecated. When Bianchini believed he had gained his confidence by soothing his mortification, he offered to take him into his school, and promised him a very superior salary to that which he had received from the Zuccati, but he was surprised by the only reply being a refusal, and by not seeing the least sign *of satisfaction* upon Bozza's countenance. He believed

that the young apprentice merely held back to obtain higher terms. Bianchini could conceive no other aim in the life of an artist, no other hope, no other glory, than gold After vainly trying to tempt him by larger offers, Vincent renounced the desire of engaging him, and assuming a totally disinterested manner, he endeavoured whilst flattering and conversing with him, to penetrate the cause of his refusal, and the hidden objects of his ambition. This was not difficult. Bozza, so suspicious and reserved, that the most generous friendship could never draw from him the secret of his weaknesses, yielded like a child to the seductions of the grossest flattery, praise was to him like the air he breathed, deprived of which he must suffer and die.

When Bianchini saw that his only thought was to obtain a mastership, and to enjoy its privileges, the authority, the independence, and the title, even if he derived no profit from his labours, and even suffered many privations, he conceived a profound contempt for this ambition, at any rate less ignoble than his own, and would have ridiculed it openly if he had not imagined that he could still use him against the Zuccati.

"Ah! my young master," said he to him, "you wish to order and not to serve. That's simple enough, and I can easily understand it in a man of talent like you. Well, that's right; you must become a master, but not in a little miserable provincial town, where you may sweat night and day for twenty years without any one's hearing of you. You must pass master at Venice; nay, at this very St. Mark, and supplant and replace the Zuccati."

"That is easier *said than done*," said Bozza; "the *Zuccati are all-powerful.*"

"Perhaps not so much so as you think," replied Vincent. "Will you promise to trust me, and aid me in all my designs? I will give you my word that before six months are over, the Zuccati shall be driven from Venice; and we two, you and I, will be absolute masters in the cathedral."

Vincent spoke with so much assurance, and he was known for a man so persevering, so skilful, and so fortunate in his enterprizes, he had escaped so many perils and repaired so many disasters, where every body else would have been ruined, that Bozza felt an emotion of pleasure pass over him, and the perspiration stood on his forehead, as though the sun instead of setting were rising from the sea, and darting its fiercest rays upon him. Bianchini seeing that he was conquered took him arm, and drawing him away, said: "Come, I will show you with your own eyes, an infallible means of ruining our enemies; but you must swear not to be overtaken by any emotion of weak sensibility, and not to ruin my projects. Your testimony is absolutely necessary to me. Are you certain not to draw back from any of the consequences of the truth, however painful they may be to your former master?"

"Where will these consequences stop?" said Bozza astonished.

"Short of life only," said Bianchini; "they will involve banishment, dishonour, and mystery."

"I will not lend myself to it," said Bozza, moving away from the tempter. "The Zuccati are honest people after all, and I cannot carry anger to hatred. Leave me, Messer Vincent, you are a bad man!"

"It appears so to you," replied Vincent, without *being moved by* an accusation at which he had long

ceased to blush. "This startles you, because you believe in the honour of the Zuccati. That looks well, and shows great *naivete* on your part; but if one could prove to you, and that by your own eyesight, that they are men without honour, who cheat the republic, wasting its revenues, stealing their salary, and adulterating their materials; if I made you see this, what would you say? And, if after having made you see it, I summoned you to give evidence of it, what would you do?"

"If my own eyes saw it, I would say that the Zuccati were the greatest hypocrites and liars I had ever known; and if in that case I was summoned to give testimony, I would do it, for they would have infamously duped me; and also, because I already hate those who set themselves over others too much not to abhor those who do it at the expense of truth. But they, liars and cheaters! I cannot believe it, though I would even wish it, that I might have the right to say to their face, 'You have not the right to despise me!'"

"Follow me," said Bianchini, with a malignant smile; "the night is dark; and besides, we may enter the cathedral at all times without exciting suspicion. Follow me, and if your courage does not fail, in six month's time you will ornament the highest point of the cupola with a great yellow devil, who will laugh more than all the others, and will be worth a hundred golden ducats to you."

Speaking thus, he glided under the sweet scented alleys, and Bozza followed, treading on the borders of thyme and fennel, and trembling as though about to commit a great crime.

CHAPTER X.

The next day saw Bozza in the school of the Bianchini, working with ardour at the chapel of St. Isidore. Francesco, to whom his brother had related exactly the occurrence of the evening before, was so bitterly wounded by this conduct that he entreated Valerio not to make any new attempt to discover its motives. He suffered in silence, and resenting an injury offered to his beloved brother, far more than one offered to himself, and not being able to conceive that any one could resist the frankness and kindness of an explanation given by Valerio, he pretended not even to see Bozza, and from this time passed him by, as though he had never known him. Valerio, who knew how much his brother had it at heart to finish his cupola, and who saw the anxiety caused by Bozza's desertion, resolved to work himself to death rather than not surmount this difficulty. Francesco's health was delicate, and his proud and sensitive soul suffered much from the fear of failing in his engagements. He was now thinking not merely of his glory as an artist, a glory upon which he reproached himself with having dwelt too much; he was behindhand even in the manual part of the work, and he was not ignorant of the intrigues already entered into by the Bianchini to blacken his reputation. When he had first accepted this enormous undertaking, his father, thinking it too laborious to *be finished in the* three years to which its accomplish*ment was limited,* endeavoured to dissuade him.

Titian, judging that the gay life of Valerio, and the feeble health of Francesco rendered its execution impossible, had often advised them to reconcile themselves with the Bianchini, and to demand a new engagement from the Procurators. But the Bianchini, who at first had formed a part of the school of the Zuccati, had but little talent and an insupportable pride. Nothing in the world would have induced Francesco to confide to them an enterprise, undertaken and conducted with so much care and love.

To understand why this artist considered it so important not to be a single day too late, we must go back a little, and state that the Cathedral of St. Mark, had for some years been experimented upon by unskilful and dishonest workmen. Considerable sums expended had only served to support a troop of debauched artisans, whose work had been obliged to be redone. Father Alberto and Rizzo, the chief master Mosaists, had shown the Procurators the necessity of regulating the work and the expenses. After many trials, Francesco Zuccato had been appointed chief of the Cathedral workshops, and Vincent Bianchini, although he had been banished fourteen years for coining and for having committed several assassinations, especially one upon his barber, had, thanks to his industry and to that of his brothers, been protected by the Procurator Melchior, who had placed them under the orders of the Zuccati. But any kind of harmony between these two families was impossible. Francesco had demanded permission to choose other workmen, and he had obtained it. To put an end to the hatred emanating *therefrom, and* to appease the Pro- *who had interested himself* for the Bianchini,

the Commissioners had decided to take upon trust their capability to work upon their own account. A less favourable position, and a longer task had been confided to them than to the Zuccati, they themselves had insisted upon these conditions, and demanded this proof of their talents. Since then, they had unceasingly boasted of themselves to the Commissioners, who, to say the least, were any thing but enlightened upon the matter, and depreciated the school of Francesco, whose modesty and candour furnished them with weapons. The Commissioners made it a point of honour to expend less upon these well conducted works than had been done upon the former, and wished upon the inauguration of the redecorated church, to merit praise and recompense from the Senate.

Francesco saw this fatal day approach; in vain he wore himself out with labour, hope began to abandon him. He saw Valerio, insensible to anxiety, still persist in his intention of celebrating on that very day the institution of a "Company of Pleasure." The departure of Bozza at such a critical moment filled him with consternation. Even, thought he, 'if Valerio were to give himself entirely up to his labour, that would not do much. Let him amuse himself then, since he is happy enough to be insensible to the shame of a failure.'

But Valerio's views were very different. He knew too well the chivalric susceptibility of his brother, not to feel that he would be inconsolable under such a mortification. He assembled his favourite pupils, Ceccato, Marini, and two others; explained to them the state of Francesco's mind, and the position *of their school in* public opinion. He entreated them *to follow his example*, not to despair, to renounce nei-

ess nor pleasure, but to stand to their task,
ıy were to perish the very day after St. Mark.
enthusiastically to second him unceasingly,
ıt their word. In order not to alarm Francesco,
ılways uneasy about the little care Valerio
ı health, they covered up with planks each
it was finished, and worked hard every night.
ıttress was thrown upon the scaffolding, and
was overcome by fatigue, he threw himself
tasted a few minutes' repose, interrupted by
songs of the others, and the creaking of the
ıeath their feet. They bore all their fatigues
declared they had never slept better than
ted by the motion of the scaffolding, and
he sound of the beetles. The inextinguish-
y of Valerio, his amusing stories, his merry
the great pitcher of Cyprus wine which went
kept up a wonderful ardour. Their zeal
ıed with success. The eve of Saint Mark
t as the day's work was done, and Francesco, in
roid the appearance even of a mute reproach
her, was affecting a resignation foreign to
ɣs, Valerio gave the signal. The pupils
ay the planks, and the master saw the fes-
the beautiful cherubim which supported it,
if by magic.

y dear Valerio," cried Francesco, transported
ıd gratitude, "was I not well inspired to
to your portrait? Are you not my guardian
liberating angel?"

it at heart to show you," said Valerio, re-
ı *embrace, "that I could* manage pleasure
ɜ *both at once. If* you are pleased with

me, I am repaid, but you must also embrace these brave companions who have so well seconded me, and who by their efforts have rendered themselves all worthy of the mastership; it now remains for you to choose, I do not say the most skilful, for they are all alike, but the first in point of seniority."

"Dear and good friends," said Francesco, after cordially embracing them, "some time since you made the generous sacrifice of your rights and your desires in favour of a young man devoured by ambition, whose talents and sufferings seemed to you worthy of interest and compassion. You intended to prove to him that he accused you wrongfully of being his rivals and his enemies. More attached to my instructions than to the vain glory of which he was so ambitious, you were upon the point of giving him a great example of virtue and generosity, by yielding your claims to the mastership voluntarily and contrary to his expectations. The ungrateful one has not waited for this happy day, when he would have been forced to admire and love you. He has, coward-like, deserted masters whom he could not comprehend, and companions whom he could not appreciate. Forget him, he who loses you is sufficiently punished; where will he find friendship more sincere, or services more disinterested? Now a right of mastership is at your disposal, as it is in my gift, and I have no other will than yours. God preserve me from having to make a choice between pupils, whom I esteem and love so tenderly. Choose therefore among yourselves. He amongst you, who has the most votes, will have mine."

"*The choice* will not take us long," said Marius, "*we foresaw, dear* master, that you would do as in pre-

and we have already made our election.
ed the majority of the suffrages of the
ato has given me his vote, and I am
this choice is the effect of injustice or
to works better than I; he has a wife and
he needs and has a right to the master-
ne, I am in no haste, I have no family,
under your directions; I have yet much
eld all my votes to Ceccato, I give him
beg you master to add yours."
me, my brother," cried Francesco, press-
n his arms. "This noble action heals
hich Bartolomeo's ingratitude had made
Yes, there still are among artists great
ile motives. Blush not, Ceccato, to accept
sacrifice; in Marini's place, we all know
ıve acted as he has done. Be as proud as
ere the hero of the evening. He who in-
riendship, is the equal of him who feels it."
bathed in tears, threw himself into
ıs, and Francesco undertook to go di-
Procurator's, in order that they might
astership annually given to one of his
ıformity to his agreement with the ma-
We will wait for you at table," said
after so much fatigue we have need of
ten to join us brother, for I am obliged
he night in preparing at San Filippo for
airs of to-morrow, and I cannot quit the
without touching glasses with you."

"Lower your tone, Messer, lower your tone,' the Procurator, "or by the ducal cap, I will ma silent long enough."

The Procurator Melchior having the hon counting among his great uncles, a doge of ' was in the habit of thinking that he was a littl a doge himself, and of swearing always by the head-gear, which, in the shape of a Phrygian horn of plenty, was the august ensign of the dignity.

"I see your Signiory is not disposed to li me," said Francesco, in a gentle, though slight temptuous tone, "I will retire for fear of disp you more, and wait a more favourable moment

"To demand the wages of your idleness a faith?" cried the Procurator. "The salary o who rob the Republic is under the Leads, Mes take care that you are not rewarded according merits."

"I am quite ignorant of any cause for such nace," replied Francesco, "and I think your S has too much wisdom and experience to wish t by the impossibility of my repelling any injusti such a quarter. The respect I owe to your dignity seals my lips, but I shall not be equ tient with the slanderers who have injured me estimation."

"By the ducal cap, this is no place to play th in, Messer. Think rather of justifying yours of accusing others."

"I will justify myself before your Signiory, *your entire satisfaction*, when you will deign to *of what I am accused*."

re accused Messer, of having unworthily trick-
ocurators, by calling yourself a mosaist. You
ter, Messer, and nothing else. Well, by my
le's cap, that is a fine talent! I congratulate
; you were not engaged to make frescoes, and
ee what yours are worth."
y honour I swear, that I am not happy
understand your Signiory."
s, you will be soon made to understand me,
then, do not hope to receive your salary.
Messer painter, you had much reason to say,
elchior understands nothing of what we are
le is a good soul, who is better employed
than directing the fine arts of the Republic.
, very well, Messer, you see the pleasan-
ur brother and companions on the worshipful
lagistrates are known. But those laugh best
t last! We shall see what figure you will
ien we examine this fine composition our-
nd you will soon see that our knowledge is at
cient to distinguish enamel from paint, and
d from stone."
sco could not repress a smile of contempt.
comprehend rightly the accusation brought
e," said he, "I am guilty of having substi-
ortion of painted pasteboard for enamel. It
have done something of the sort as to the
cription which your Signiory had ordered to
over the principal exterior door. I thought
our Signiory had not taken the trouble of
this inscription too flattering to us yourself,
confided it *to some one*, who had done it
I therefore allowed myself to correct the word

saxibus. But faithful to the obedience I owe to the respectable Procurators, I have preserved, in the stone work beneath, the word just as it came to me from their hands, and only permitted my brother to correct it on a piece of pasteboard fastened over the stone. If your Signiory thinks I have done wrong, it is easy to take away the pasteboard, and the text will appear underneath, copied faithfully, as you may verify by your own eyes."

"Better and better, Messer," cried the Procurator, beside himself with anger. "You are exposing yourself truly: and this is a proof against you, of which I shall take notice. Ho, there, let my secretary take a note of this avowal. By the ducal cap, Messer, we will lower your insolent crest. What! you pretend to correct the Procurators! They understand Latin rather better than you! Just look here! what a prodigy of learning? Who could have expected such a variety of talents. I had better apply for the Latin professorship for you at the university of Padua, for to be sure you are too great a genius to be confined to mosaic work."

"If your Signiory is so much attached to your barbarism," replied Francesco, impatiently, "I can remove the piece of pasteboard immediately. The whole Republic will know to-morrow that the Procurators do not pride themselves upon their good latinity, but after all, what does that matter to me?"

Speaking thus, he went towards the door, whilst the Procurator kept shouting to him to get out of his presence, an order he did not wait to have repeated, for he felt he was losing all self command.

Hardly had he left the room, when Vincent Bian-

i, who being in the next room, had overheard all, red hastily.

Monsignor!" said he, "what are you doing? you i him that his fraud is discovered, and yet you let depart!"

What would you have me do?" replied the Procu-. "I have refused his salary, and given him a re mortification. That is punishment enough for ty. After to-morrow, we will commence proceed- against him."

And during these two nights," said Bianchini, em- ically, he will get into the cathedral and replace he pieces of pasteboard by pieces of enamel, so ctly, that I shall seem to have made a false depo- , and all my devotion to the Republic will turn it myself!"

id how would you have me prevent his evil in- s," said the Procurator, alarmed? "I can close hedral."

I cannot do that, on account of St. Mark's e cathedral will be crowded with people, o knows by what means he can get into securely closed building. And then, he will companions, come to an understanding with up excuses..... All is over, and I am lost, not act with vigour immediately."

re right Bianchini, we must act directly, but

it a word, send two officers after him, he is the bottom of the staircase, throw him into

ducal cap! *that idea* never entered my *but Vincent, that is* indeed severe, to use *f authority. . . .*"

"But Monsignor, if you let him escape, cule you all his life, and his brother the such a favourite with all those young patrici so jealous of your wisdom and power, will l caricatures."

"You speak well, dear Vincent," cried t tor, ringing his bell violently. "The d must be respected.... You know I am family myself!"

"And you will be Doge some day, I Bianchini. "All Venice expects to see th upon your head...."

The officers were dispatched. Five m wards, the melancholy Francesco, without what authority, or in punishment of wh conducted with bandaged eyes across a galleries, courts, and staircases, towards destined for him. He stopped a moment terious route, and from the noise of waters he knew he was crossing the Bridge of heart sank within him, and the name of Va on his lips, as an eternal farewell.

CHAPTER XII.

Valerio waited for his brother at the tavern, until, hurried away by the young men who came to seek him, he was obliged to relinquish all hope of touching glasses with him, and the new 'master' Ceccato.

Full of cares and commissions for the *fete* of the next day, he passed half the night in running from his workshop to the square of St. Mark, where the preparations were being made for the game of running at the ring—and thence to the different tradesmen and artificers who were employed on this occasion. In these short journeys, he was accompanied by his gallant apprentices and many other young men of different trades, who were all devoted to him, and whom he employed to carry messages from one part to another. Whenever the merry band resumed their progress, it was to the sound of song and laughter, joyous preludes of the pleasures of the morrow.

Valerio did not return home before three o'clock in the morning. He was surprised not to find his brother, but yet he did not feel much disquieted. Francesco had an attachment, which he rather neglected, whilst it, his dominant passion, occupied all his time, but for which he often absented himself when his undertakings allowed him a little respite. Valerio was not of a character to fancy evil, the mere apprehension of which weakens the courage of many men. He went to sleep, feeling certain of meeting his brother at San Filippo *the next morning, or at the* first place of meeting for *the joyous members of* the Lizard.

It is generally known that in the days of its splendour the republic of Venice, besides the numerous organized bodies which maintained its laws, recognized also a crowd of private companies approved of by the senate; devout associations encouraged by the clergy, and joyous clubs tolerated and indulged in secret by a government always anxious to maintain the activity of the working classes, as well as a taste for luxury. The devout or religious associations were often composed of a single corporation, when that was rich enough to bear the expense, for instance that of the merchants, the tailors, the bombardiers, etc. Others were composed of the artisans or shopkeepers of a single parish, and assumed its name as, St. Jean Eleemosynary, The Madonna of the garden, St. George of the sea-weed, St. Francis of the vine, etc.—Each brotherhood had a building, which they called their school, and which they decorated at their common expense with the works of the greatest painters, sculptors, and architects. These schools were generally composed of a lower room called the Albergo, where the brethren usually assembled, of an ornamented staircase, in itself a sort of museum, and of a vast hall or saloon, where mass was said and conferences held.

Many of these *schools* still remain in Venice, either preserved by the government as monuments of art, or become the property of individuals. That of St. Mark is at present the museum of painting in the town, that of St. Roche contains several *chef-d'œuvres* of Tintoretto and other illustrious masters. Mosaic pavements, ceilings beautifully gilded or ornamented with frescoes by Veronese or Pordenone, wainscots *beautifully sculp*tured in wood or bronze, light yet

-reliefs where the whole history of Christ or
ɔurite saint is executed in white marble with
ivable detail and finish; such are the
the power and wealth to which aristocratic
ıay attain, but under the excess of which
fallibly doomed to perish.
he *fete* day of the saint, honoured by each
or brotherhood, called *segra*, and on which
ved all their splendour, they had the right
ıg at all the banquets and solemnities of the
lorned with the insignia of their different
ı.
procession of St. Mark, they took their
ınk; that is to say, they followed the clergy
urch, carrying their shrines, crosses, and
ıd placing themselves in chapels reserved
ıring the offices of religion. The merely
herhoods had not the same privileges, but
permitted to assemble in the great square,
ıeir tents and establish their jousts and
Each company chose its title and emblem
o its fancy, and recruited where it chose;
composed entirely of patricians, others were
ıately noble and plebeian, favoured by the
ıixture of rank, which is still evident in
The old paintings have preserved many of
t yet *bizarre* costumes of the *compagni*
who wore one white and one red stocking,
ıst of their dress variegated with the most
lours. The company of St. Mark wore a
ɔn on the breast, that of St. Theodoseus a
ıdile on the arm, *etc.*
Zuccato, celebrated for his exquisite taste

and skill in inventing and executing such devices, had himself directed everything connected with the exterior decorations, and it might truly be said, that in this respect the company of the Lizard excelled every other. He had chosen this climbing animal as his emblem, because all the trades who had yielded their choicest members to him, architects, sculptors, glass blowers, painters on glass, mosaists, and fresco painters, were by the very nature of their labours, in the habit of working and existing, so to speak, climbing or suspended to the panels of walls and domes.

On the day of St. Mark, 1570, according to Stringa, and 1574, according to other authors, the immense procession took its way through St. Mark's square under the arcades of tents erected for this occasion outside the stone galleries of the Procurators' palace, which were too low to yield a passage to the enormous golden crosses, the gigantic chandeliers, the shrines of *lapis lazuli* surmounted by beautifully sculptured silver lilies, the reliquaries crowned in a pyramidal form by precious stones; in a word, all that ruinous paraphernalia of which priests are so zealous, and the citizens of the corporations so vain. As soon as the religious sons were engulphed by the yawning doors of the cathedral, and whilst the poor and the children collected the drops of perfumed wax which fell upon the pavement from the thousands of wax tapers, or greedily sought for any gem or pearl dropped from the sacred jewels, there was seen to arise, as if by magic, in the middle of the square, a large circus, surrounded by wooden galleries, beautifully decorated with variegated festoons and silken draperies, under which the ladies *could seat themselves* and view the games, sheltered

heat of the sun. The pillars which sup-
se galleries were covered with flags, on which
read gallant devices in the *naive* and witty
dialect. In the midst of the circus rose a
illar in the shape of a palm tree, up the stalk
were climbing a crowd of beautiful lizards,
er, green, blue, striped, infinitely varied; at
ıit of the pillar a beautiful white-winged
ıt towards this agile troop, holding a crown
nd. At the foot of the tree, upon a platform
ıy velvet, under a dais of brocade ornamented
st ingenious arabesques, sat the queen of the
iver of the prize, the young Marietta Robusti,
ıter of Tintoretto, a beautiful girl about
ars of age, whom Valerio delighted to call
f his heart, and towards whom he displayed
tender care and gallant attentions. When
were all occupied, she appeared, clothed like
an Bellini's Angels, in a white tunic, a light
ery, and an elegant wreath of vine leaves on
iful fair hair, which fell in thick golden curls
alabaster neck. She was conducted by Messer
'ecelli, Titian's son, who was dressed in the
ashion, as he had just arrived from Byzan-
ı his father. He seated himself near her, as
a numerous group of young people distin-
ıither by their talents or birth, for whom places
had been reserved upon the seats of the dais.
eries were filled with magnificently dressed
ended by their cavaliers. In a vast place re-
r them, many dignified persons did not dis-
:at themselves; *the Doge* set the example;
panied the young duke of Anjou, afterwards

Henry III. of France, who was then passing throug Venice. Luigi Mocenigo (the doge) had it at hea to do, as it may be said, the honours of the city, and t display to his eyes, accustomed to the more vigorou enjoyments, and more savage feasts of the Sarmatian the dazzling luxury, and the delightful gaiety of th brilliant youth of Venice.

When all were ready a purple curtain was raised, an the gallant companions of the Lizard issuing from tent which had been closed until then, appeared in square phalanx, having at their head, musicians clothe in the grotesque fashion of ancient times, and in th midst their chief, Valerio. They advanced in goo order in front of the Doge and senators. The rank opened, and Valerio taking the banner of red satin upon which the silver Lizard shone, separated himsel from the troop, and saluted with bended knee the chie of the Republic. A murmur of admiration greeted th handsome cavalier, whose strange, yet magnificent cos tume displayed his elegant and graceful figure. H was clothed in a close-fitting dress of green velvet wit large slashed sleeves, open at the bosom to show a corse let of smyrna stuff, embroidered with silken flower most admirably coloured ; on his left thigh he bore th escutcheon of the company, the Lizard embroidered pearls upon a ground of cramoisy velvet; his buckler w a *chef-d'œuvre* of arabesque, and his poignard enrich with precious stones, was a gift to him, brought Titian from the east; a superb plume of white feath fastened to his cap by a diamond *agraffe* fell to waist, and waved with every movement like the majes crest, which the Chinese pheasant raises or depres *with so much* grace at every step.

a moment joy at his success, and natural youth-
beamed upon the young man's animated
nce, and his sparkling glance wandered over
ats, and met all eyes fixed on him. Soon,
this fugitive joy gave place to deep inquietude;
vandered searchingly through the crowd, yet
t the one he sought. Valerio smothered a
returned to his company, where he remained
in thought insensible to the gaiety around
to the noise of the *fete*, and with a cloud upon
Francesco, notwithstanding his promise to
ne banner himself to the Doge, had not yet
appearance.

CHAPTER XIII.

The brilliant company of the Lizard made of the square three times, amidst the applau spectators, who were surprised, and not witho at the fine figures and high bearing apparen young champions. In accordance with the fe of the company, it was requisite, in order mitted, that the candidate should be of a certa have no deformity, not be above forty yea and belong to a respectable family, so as not branded on his brow any of those degrading l signs, which perpetuate the outward indi vice from generation to generation, under t physical ugliness. Every applicant was prove his good health, his truth and loyalty, ing freely on the day of trial. Valerio's idea a good workman ought to be able to bear wit being inconvenienced by it, and that an h man would have nothing to fear either for l his friends reputation from the involuntary of drunkenness. It is curious to look at so statutes of this bacchic constitution.

"No one to be admitted, who after dri measures of Cyprus wine, shall become idioti

"No one to be admitted who at the sevent shall babble anything to the detriment of companion."

"No one to be admitted who at the eighth *shall betray the* secret of his love, and tell th *his mistress.*"

ıe to be admitted who at the ninth measure
ıy the confidence of a friend."
ıe to be admitted who at the tenth measure
ıtop and refuse to drink more."
d be difficult now to determine the size of
ıre of Cyprus wine, but if we judge of it by
t of the armour they wore at the combat, of
nidable specimens remain in our museums,
that it would make the most intrepid drink-
present day draw back.
npanions of the Lizard wore, like their chief,
ɔublet, and the rest of their dress white and
ng; but they wore an upper robe of yellow
rlet plume, and a black and silver shield.
the company had promenaded and shown
ıers and costumes sufficiently, they re-entered
, and twenty couples of horses appeared in

The introduction of these noble animals
ls was a luxury much admired in Venice,
the eyes of a people, but little accustomed to
could not be satisfied by reality, they were
:amorphosed by means of strange costumes
stic animals. Their skin was painted, false
ɔxes, bulls, or lions, were attached to them,
birds' crests on their heads, others gilded
d others masks of fabulous animals. Those
by the company of the Lizard were hand-
d consequently less extravagantly travestied
usual at that time. Nevertheless, some were
as unicorns by a long silver horn attached to
of their bridle, others had brilliant dragons,
birds, upon their heads, some were painted
ır, some turquoise blue, apple green, or scar-

let; others were striped like zebras, or spotte
panthers, and others bore imitations of the
scales of the great monsters of the deep. Each
of horses, similarly harnessed, entered the lists
ducted by a Moresco, or little black slave, fantas
dressed, walking between the two animals
caracoled spiritedly to the sound of trumpets, a
enthusiastic acclamations of the crowd.

Valerio alone directed by a purer taste, appeare
a Turkish horse, white as snow, and of rem
beauty, who bore only a simple housing of tiger
Broad silver bands supplied the place of reins,
long mane, carefully mixed with silver threa
plaited, and at the end of each tress hung a
granate flower beautifully carved in silver, hi
were silvered over, and his magnificent tail las
noble sides in perfect freedom. Like his mas
bore the escutcheon of the company, the silve
on a ground of cramoisy, painted with great
the left thigh, and as he had the honour of
the chief, he was the only horse decorated
escutcheon.

Valerio ordered the horses to be uncoupl
placing himself at the foot of the platform wh
little Marietta Robusti sat, he selected ten
joyous companions to sustain the challenge
mounting ten of the horses, placed themselves
each side of him. The young Moors then lea
other ten unmounted horses round the arena
until ten champions from among the spectator
present themselves for the contest. They w
long in making their appearance, and the gam
menced.

ıming at the ring, and when many prizes had
ıd won, other competitors from the specta-
ım the companions of the Lizard took the
e vanquished. The games were prolonged
ıe, the chief remaining always on his horse
oming, and still more often conversing with
Marietta, who vainly entreated him to take
was to him alone, she said, that she wished
e grand prize. Valerio in these exercises
superiority of which he disdained to make
ıe liked better to protect and animate the
his companions. Besides he was thoughtful
e could not conceive after the devoted
which he had given proof by finishing the
of his brother, that Francesco should carry
to such a point as not to come to the
n as a spectator.

rio aroused himself from his reverie, when
Bianchini descended into the arena, and
measure themselves with the most skilful
the society. Dominic Bianchini, commonly
etto or the Red, was a very good horseman.
ved in foreign countries for a long time,
ci ence of horsemanship is much more culti-
in Venice. It was not all the companions
ırd who knew how to bear themselves in
ps, only those who had been educated in the
r were strangers in the town, knew how to
bridle and keep their balance on their seat
ss peaceful than a Venetian gondola. Three
t skilful presented themselves to do battle
ianchini, and were completely conquered in
und; three others succeeded and shared the

same fate. The honour of the company was in jeop
Valerio was mortified, for, until then, his cavalier
had the advantage over all the young people of the
and even over the young nobles, who had not disd
to measure themselves with them. But his hear
so heavy that he did not even trouble himself to
up the glove, nor to lower the pride of the Bian
Vincent seeing his indifference, and attributin
the fear of being overcome, cried to him in his
voice:

"Hola there, Monsignor Prince of the Lizard
you changed into a tortoise, or have you no more
pions to oppose to us?"

Valerio gave a sign, and Ceccato, and Mari
mounted themselves.

"And you, Signor Valerio, or rather your Maj
the Lizard," exclaimed in his turn Dominic th
"do you disdain to measure yourself with an ant
of so low a quality as myself?"

"In good time, if necessary," replied Valerio.
your brothers try first with my two friends, and i
able to beaten, I will give you your revenge."

The two Bianchini again carried off the victo
Valerio resolving not to leave them the adv
spurred his horse to the gallop. The trumpet
both their proudest and most joyous sounds, a
lightning speed he made the tour of the arena
times, neither raising his arm, nor regarding th
but suddenly, whilst apparently thinking of other
and in a moment of abstraction, he carried off t
rings with a disdainful and nonchalant air. The
chini had as yet only carried off four; the
unwonted fatigued, and as they had gained ever

this defeat need not have caused them much
ion. But Dominic the Red, who had taken
this last trial, and had been resting himself
time, burnt with a desire to humiliate Valerio.
him with peculiar hatred, because Valerio
nted his being received into the company of
rd, on account of his revolting ugliness.
is eldest brother, had been rejected because
rfeited his honour and undergone an infamous
nt. Gian Antonio had been admitted to the
he had scarcely drunk three measures of
re he lost all command of himself, and in-
ny respectable people. All three therefore
emselves excluded from the club for most
g reasons, and to avenge themselves, they had
zza believe, that he was rejected beforehand,
e was illegitimate, and thus had prevented
inserting himself upon the list.
ic thrust himself before Valerio, who was
to his place intending to leave the lists open
er. "You promised me my revenge, Don
said he; "are you already withdrawing from
?"—Valerio turned, and regarding Dominic
air of contempt, re-entered the arena with
out any other reply.
n, since you are the winner," said Dominic with
al air, "Honour to whom honour is due."
o carried off four rings, but what did not hap-
n once in a hundred times, occurred now, he
he fifth ring, and it fell to the ground. He
distracted by his father's figure, who had just
himself in a neighbouring gallery. The old
seemed troubled, he was seeking Francesco,

and the severe looks he directed at Vale
say as the awful voice of other days to
is thy brother?"

The Bianchini uttered a cry of joy.
themselves already revenged by Dom
vainglorious hurry deceived him; he mis
ring, and Valerio remained conqueror.
would not have satisfied Valerio's self-lo
time, but he wished so ardently to clo
and to go in search of his brother, that
his breath freely when he found himself
go and receive the prize.

Already Marietta's little hands held th
scarf, when just as he was putting h
ground amidst the general applause, Bar
clothed in black from head to foot, wi
plume, appeared in the arena, as sudde
he had sprung from the earth; and dem
tain the side of the Bianchini.

"I have had enough, the games are
Valerio impatiently.

"And how long," exclaimed Bozza in
bitter voice, "Has it been the custom f
the course to recoil at the last moment, f
losing an unfairly acquired prize? In
owe Messer Dominic a revenge, for he
disturbed in his last attempt. Besides, h
fatigued, and you have no right to be s
not as cowardly as your emblem the liza
to give me a chance."

"I will give you this chance," said
provoked, "but this evening or to-mor
give me one of a more serious nature

r in which you presume to speak to me.
begin. I yield you precedence, and give
points."
ot want one," said Bozza—"A horse here
What, that wretched hack!" cried he, turn-
s the Moresco, who brought forward a fiery
ave you not one less broken backed?"
ıg, he sprung with surprising agility upon the
ithout even putting his foot into the stirrup,
him curvet and caracole with a courage and
hich prejudiced every one in his favour, then
ward like a thunderbolt:—
ır play for less than ten rings," cried he in
ıt tone.
ngs let it be," cried Valerio, whose preoc-
ınner began to shake the confidence of his

ıarried off the ten rings in a single round,
ıbruptly checking his horse in the midst of
in the intrepid and vigorous manner of the
leaped to the ground, whilst the animal
ew his lance into the middle of the arena,
ling his adversary with a countenance full
ılaced himself with a nonchalant air at the
ırietta Robusti.
deeply piqued, felt his spirits revive; he had
gs to carry off to win the prize. This was
d his powers, but more than he was accus-
do, for five was the number usually attempted,
a must have had extreme practice to obtain
ess. Nevertheless contempt and resentment
strength to *the young* man. He set off and
ine rings well, but at the very moment of

touching the tenth, he felt that he trembled, and g
his horse the spur, in order to have a pretext to m
the round again.

"Well!" said a voice in the neighbouring gall
It was the voice of old Zuccato, it seemed to
"you are losing time, Valerio, your brother is in d
ger," at least Valerio's imagination was deeply stru
but he brought his horse round, and achieved the te
ring.

Bozza turned pale; there was but one more ri
and he was conquered, but it was the decisive
ment, and Valerio was visibly moved. Neverthe
pride combated this secret terror, and he would h
infallibly conquered, had not Vincent Bianchini, see
his inevitable success, and being near enough to
heard, said to him with a lowering look.

"Yes, play on, gain, rejoice thou creeping anir
not long will it be before thou crawlest under the L
with thy brother!"

At the very moment he pronounced these last wo
Valerio touched the ring, he became pale as death,
the ring fell. Hisses were heard on all sides, and
companions and partisans of the Bianchini gave v
to their insolent and furious joy.

"My brother," exclaimed Valerio, "my brother
der the Leads. Where is the coward who said it,
has seen my brother, who can tell me where he is?

But his cries were lost in the tumult: order was
turbed, Bozza received the prize, and was car
away in triumph by the school of the Bianchini,
were now joined by all the dissatisfied who had
refused admission into the company of the Lizard.

Many vulgar jests, many significant pantomimes

e noisy crowd. The ladies, alarmed, pressed
barricades to let this bacchanal rout go by.
inions of the Lizard wished to draw their
pursue them, and the police and halberdiers
lifficulty in restraining them. The rest of
went away, mourning for the handsome
whom all, but especially the women, were
rested. The little Marietta wept, and
rown in vexation under the horses' feet.
nidst of this deafening confusion, Valerio,
s of his defeat, and tortured by anxiety for
, ran at hazard through the city, with a dis-
ntenance, asking news of his brother from
e met.

CHAPTER XIV.

"What are you dreaming of, master?" said Ceccato, joining Valerio in the midst of the crowd, and seizing him by the arm. "How can you allow yourself to be so troubled by a mere cowardly assertion? Do you not see that Bianchini invented that trick just to make you miss the ring? He deserves to be well punished; but if you abandon your companions, and sadden the *fete* by your absence, the Bianchini will, indeed, triumph. It is easy to see that they have done all this to revenge themselves for their expulsion. Come, master, come and re-conduct the little queen, and make the tour of the quays with the music; the company cannot promenade without its chief. At vespers we will all seek Messer Francesco."

"But where can he be?" said Valerio, clasping his hands. "Who knows what they may have devised to throw him into prison?"

"Into prison! Impossible, master; for what reason? on what pretext? Do they throw a man into prison at the first word spoken?"

"Yet he is not here; some powerful reason must detain him. He knows that I cannot enjoy the *fete* without him; and although he does not love *fetes*, he owed me this mark of complaisance, this recompense for my labours. Our enemies must have drawn him into an ambush; perhaps assassinated him! Vincent Bianchini *is capable of any thing!*"

"*Master, your brain* is turned; for the love of heaven

st us! See, our company is dispersing,
not take our revenge at the regatta this
Bianchini will make such a noise, that
be talked of to-morrow but the failure of
of the Lizard."
lt a little reassured by the thought that per-
sco had gone to see his father, and had
d by him. The oddity and severity of old
norized this idea to a certain point, and the
he had cast, made Valerio think he had
sly to blame him. He endeavoured to find
the crowd, although sure of meeting those
of which old Zuccato, notwithstanding his
or his children, was so lavish. However,
find him; and surrounded by his discon-
anions, he was forced, rather than see them
nselves entirely, to march at their head to
he canal of St. George, known at present
of the Esclavons.
ting sounds of the music, the proud and
stic gaiety of the little Marietta, whom
ons carried in a sort of palanquin decorated
, streamers, and arabesques designed by
dmiration of the spectators on the Lagunes,
eamen of the port grouped on the shore
hipping, the noise and the motion a little
Valerio. He breathed again at the hope
is brother during the service for which the
re ringing, and which would suspend the
hen the sheath of a dagger fell from the
ical palace at his feet. Struck by a sudden
eized it, and drew from it a billet written
of fusanus wood which Francesco had
pocket.

"Companions passing in joy to the sound o
make known to Valerio Zuccato, that his
under the leads, and that he waits his—"
contained no more. Hearing the music ap
fearing it would pass, Francesco, who cou
thing, but recognized Valerio's favourite m
by the Hautboys, did not wait to finish h
but threw his note through the slit at the
window in the wall, called with good reaso
cal language, the *jour de souffrance.*

Valerio uttered a terrible cry, and Fran
withstanding the noise of the instruments
crowd, heard his thundering voice exclaim

"My brother under the Leads! Curses o
have sent him there!"

Valerio stopped with a movement so ene
an army could not have carried him forwar
company stopped simultaneously, the fatal
from rank to rank, and they dispersed in
some to follow Valerio, who darted lik
through the arcades of the palace, others
Bianchini, and to force from them the sec
machinations.

Valerio, transported with rage and with g
ran forward without well knowing whither
ing an instinctive feeling, he entered the
Ducal Palace. At this instant the Doge wa
ing the Giant's staircase with the Duke of
Procurators, and part of the senate. Vale
boldly through all these noble lords, mak
his own impetuosity, and threw himself a
the Doge, whom he even detained by his erm

"*What* do you want, my son?" said
turning kindly towards him. "Why is yo

ll of despair?—have you suffered any in-
:an I repair it?"
ess," cried Valerio, pressing the skirt of the
to his lips. "Yes, I have suffered a great
nd my soul is weighed down by grief. My
ıer, Francesco Zuccato, the first mosaic
all Italy, the bravest champion, and most
en of the Republic, has been conducted to
without your order, without your permis-
come to demand justice."
: Leads! Francesco Zuccato!" cried the
Who can have inflicted so severe a punish-
brave a young man, on so great an artist?
ıas committed a fault which merits chastise-
is it that I am not informed of it?—Who
the order?—which of you gentlemen will
me for it?"
replied, and Valerio continued.
ess," said he, "the Procurators entrusted
repairs in the Cathedral ought to know;
Melchior the cashier must know."
find out, Valerio," replied the Doge.
ourself, justice shall be done. Let us now

ess, strike me with your sword if my auda-
ı you," said Valerio, without leaving hold of
mantle, "but listen to the complaint of the
ul of your fellow citizens. Francesco Zuc-
ıve committed no fault. He is a man who
had an evil thought. To send him to the
do him an injustice for which he can never
d, *and with which* the whole city will be
in an hour, if you do not restore his liberty,

and permit him to show himself with his companions, to the public, who are already marvelling not to see him at their head. Yet more, Highness, listen to me. Francesco is frail of body as a reed of the Lagunes. If he passes a day more beneath the Leads, it is enough, he will never come out, and you will have lost the best artist and the best citizen of the Republic; and other misfortunes will arise, for I swear by the blood of Christ . . . ."

"Silence, my son," said the Doge gravely; "utter no senseless menaces. I cannot restore a prisoner to liberty without the consent of the Senate, and the Senate will not do it without knowing for what fault he suffers this chastisement, for some heavy suspicion must attach to a man who is condemned to the Leads. I promise you justice; do not mis-doubt the father of the Republic, but render yourself worthy of his protection by wise and prudent conduct. All that I can now do to soften your anxiety and the solitude of your brother, is to give you permission to visit him, and to bestow your care upon him if his health requires it."

"Thanks, Highness. Blessings on you for this permission," said Valerio, bowing his head and dropping the Doge's mantle, who passed on. The Duke of Anjou stopped before Valerio and said to him with a gracious smile: "Young man, take courage, I undertake to remind the Doge that he has promised you speedy justice, and if your brother resemble you, I doubt not, that he is a brave cavalier, and a loyal subject. Know that notwithstanding your defeat, I *regard you* as the hero of the day, and that your *appearance* and great talents interest me so strongly

in your favour that I wish to attach you to the Court of France when the noble Republic of Venice shall no longer have need of your services."

Speaking this, he took off his rich chain of gold, and passed it round Valerio's neck, begging him to keep it in memory of the giver.

CHAPTER XV.

Two halberdiers conducted Valerio to prison.

"You also," cried Francesco, "hav also conquered you, poor youth? Of to be without ambition and vanity? Sa have they not even respected thee!"

"I am not a prisoner by the will of th said Valerio, embracing his brother, "b I quit you no more. I come to share yo and your black bread. But tell me who and on what pretext?"

"I know not," replied Francesco, " astonished, are we not in Venice?"

Valerio tried to console his brother, ar him that he must have been arrested fr conception, and that he would be imm liberty. But Francesco replied with pr cholv:—

"It is too late, they have caused me they could, they have inflicted an insul efface. What imports it now, whether I a year in this frightful prison? Do you is the heat, do you think it is the sufferi I have felt during this interminable have suffered all the tortures of the so among rogues and impostors! I, who *watchful nights*, after such conscientio *much zeal and* devotion to my country

carried in triumph, and crowned by my
, amidst the acclamations of a grateful people ;
l me, in a dungeon, as Vincent Bianchini has
for assassination and coining! Behold the fruit
labours, behold the recompense of my courage!
conscientious artist, wear out in gnawing cares,
enfeebling studies, the remains of a suffering and
arious life; renounce the allurements of love, the
ictions of pleasure, the voluptuous repose of the
hts of spring; and the day when you hope to have
erved a crown, you will be loaded with fetters, you
l be covered with shame! And this blind and fickle
iblic, who so unwillingly salutes truth, has always
rms for calumny! Be sure Valerio, that even now,
his people, who has seen me from my birth grow and
strengthen in the love of labour, in the hatred of in-
justice, and in respect for the laws, this very people
who only judge of human motives by their failure or
success, be sure they condemn me already; now that
they have known for ten minutes that I am in prison.
It is sufficient that I am unfortunate for them to believe
me guilty. Already my name is confounded with that
of Vincent Bianchini; we have both been arrested, our
heads have both bent beneath the Leads. I may perhaps
be restored to liberty, because I am innocent, but was
not he also restored, he who was guilty? Who knows, if
like him, I shall not be banished? Does not Venice
banish all whom she suspects, and does not she suspect
every one who is denounced?"

Valerio felt that his brother's grief was but too well
founded, and that in endeavouring to reconcile him
to his situation, *he only made* him more sensible of
its rigour and its dangers. Towards evening he wished

to go out to seek for food and a mantle for
but upon summoning the jailor through
the man told him, that he had received a
to let him leave the prison, and even sh
paper with the seal of the Inquisitors of sta
the arrest of the brothers Zuccati, without t
intimation of its cause. A cry of grief esc
cesco when he heard this decree.

"Behold," said he, "the last blow. Th
could not they rid themselves of me, witho
the torture of seeing my brother's suffering

"Do not pity me," said Valerio, "pe
would not have allowed me to pass my days
with you, and now, thanks to them, I shall
you!"

Many days and many nights passed a
the brothers Zuccati receiving any explan
their position, or any consolation in th
anxiety. The heat was overpowering,
raged in Venice, the atmosphere of the
infected. Francesco, lying upon a heap
and dusty straw, seemed almost to have lost
of his sufferings; from time to time, he st
his arm to carry to his lips a few drops
water from a pewter goblet. Weakened b
sweats, he dried his sharpened features wit
linen, which Valerio kept for him with ex
and washed every day, setting aside for th
half of his own miserable supply of water. I
the only service he could render his unfo
ther. He was in want of everything. I
all his rich habiliments to form, with s
straw, a kind of pillow and screen, and wa

or his own clothing, where some remains of embroidery might yet be seen. Valerio had fered his pearls, his poniard, and his gold the jailors, to induce them to procure for some relaxation of the frightful severity of *duro.* The officers of the inquisition were ble.

standing the impossibility of assisting his Valerio constantly bent over him. More ro- too much absorbed by Francesco's sufferings s own, he was constantly occupied in turn- pon his miserable couch, fanning him with plume of his cap, touching his burning d watching his fading looks. Francesco no mplained, he had lost all hope. When he a moment from his sufferings, he endeavoured pon his brother, to say something affection- n, and then sunk again into an alarming

ening Valerio was seated as usual upon the es, with Francesco's languid head upon his The unpitying sun went down upon a fiery inged with a sinister light the walls, which ated red, seemed to absorb and preserve all of a conflagration. The plague was every ending its ravages. All the sounds so ani- joyful, of magnificent Venice, had given way nce of death; only interrupted by the mourn- of the bell for the dying, or the distant some pious monk, as he passed down the nducting a bark full of corpses to the ceme- nartin *came and perched* upon the narrow *yielded a rarefied* and withering atmosphere

to the cell of the Zuccati. This black swallow, its blood-red breast, sharp and piercing voice, proud and savage attitude, seemed to Valerio of augury. It appeared disquieted, and after callin its peculiar manner to some companion, flew a uttering a cry which the Venetians know well, which they never hear without consternation. the cry with which these migratory birds asser when the time for their change of hemisphere arrived. They assemble in numerous bands, the vens are darkened by them, and the same day see and all disappear. Their departure is the signa the appearance of a veritable scourge. The *Moz* almost imperceptible insects, whose sharp and tinual buzzing is irritating, even to fever, and w sting is insupportable, fill the atmosphere, an longer pursued in the higher regions by the ch swallow, alight on the houses, infest them, and r all slumber those Venetians whom the applianc luxury do not preserve from their attacks.

Under the Leads and at a season when the charged with pestilential exhalations, instilled its v into every pore, the appearance of the Mozelins was soon followed by that of the Scorpions, was l death warrant to Francesco. Although burnt up violent fever, he had as yet tasted at night a little re during those hours when the refreshing breeze re even him, but this repose was now snatched from During the night, these gnats penetrate into dwelling, especially where the warm breath of attracts them. Valerio listened with anxiety. *heard a thousand* sharp cries, and unquiet and *chirpings, calling*, replying, now far, now near

ıbled, settled on the roofs as though in
ı, and took wing uttering their piercing
a final malediction over the grieving city.
aced himself under the window whence
t the sky was visible. He saw the black
ing over the heavens at an immeasurable
more pursuing the extensive regular circles
ase, but all flying in a straight line towards
The swallows were already on their way.
had heard their parting cry. He had read
s countenance the horror of this discovery.
is overwhelmed by suffering he knows not
: forward to fresh misfortune, although im-
l inevitable; he has no longer the strength
magination, future evil to present ill. When
ıppens he is crushed as by an unexpected
:. Death itself—that fatal, that unavoidable
ıt of existence takes nearly all men by sur-
ı injustice of heaven, as a caprice of destiny:
o-morrow," said Francesco to his brother in
ed voice, "I shall sleep no more!"—This
ıuncing his own death-warrant. Valerio
him, and let his head drop upon his breast,
:r tears, which till then he had stoically re-
ıwed in torrents down his wasted cheeks.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Inquisition was a power so myst
potic, there was so much danger in e
penetrate its secrets, and the endeavour
that three days after St. Mark, no one
the arrest of the Zuccati. The report
imprisonment had quickly spread, and
like the wave which expires upon the d
strand. The smallest rock would rep
fore excite it, but an expanse of sand, fo
and wasted by storms, receives the wa
impression, and there all strength dies
of exercise; such was Venice. The
vescence, the natural curiosity of her pe
itself like the vain foam of the sea on
ducal palace, and the gloomy waters w
vaults, bear away at all times a trace of
the unknown source is concealed in
abysses of these discreet caverns.

The Plague also had filled all hearts
tion and discouragement. All labour
all the schools dispersed; Marini had l
of the first, and was struggling in a sl
convalescence. Ceccato had lost one
and was attending an almost dying wife

The rage of the Bianchinis had be
time by the fear of death. Bozza had d

Old Sebastian Zuccato had gone in
the very day of St. Mark, at the end

a fit of ill humour, at what he called the extravagance and false glory of his sons. He was entirely ignorant of their misfortunes, and was indignant that they came not as usual to soften his anger by their respectful attentions.

The Plague having a little abated its malignity, the old Zuccato feared he might have lost his sons during its continuance. He went to Venice, intending to scold his sons, but full of anxiety, and even more angrily disposed towards them, because he found it impossible not to love them. It must not be imagined that the scene in the cathedral had reconciled Sebastian to mosaic work. He was still exasperated against this species of labour, and those who gave themselves up to it. If he had experienced, against his will, that influence which great achievements exercise over an artist's soul, if he had pressed his children to his bosom, and shed tears of sympathy, he had not yielded any of his prejudices as to the pre-eminence of certain branches of art; even had he so willed, he could not at the threshold of the grave, have given up the obstinate opinions of his whole life. His only consolation was the hope of seeing Francesco one day renounce his vile trade, and return to the easel. Intending to renew his exhortations to this effect, he went to the Cathedral expecting to find him still occupied with some other cupola, but he found it hung with black, and mournful sounds echoing through the gloomy aisles. The tapers, struggling in the last faint beams of day, threw a pale red light more fearful than utter darkness. The last honours were being paid to two senators who had died of the *plague.* Their biers were in the portico, *the service was being* hurried through, and it was easy

to see that the priests fulfilled their holy office w
fear and trembling. The old Zuccato trembled fr
head to foot on seeing these two coffins, and was o
reassured by hearing the names of the deceased ma
trates. He left the Cathedral, and hurried to Valer
workshop at San Filippo. But there he was told t
neither Valerio nor Francesco had appeared after
St. Mark, and he then sought them without succes
all their accustomed haunts. At last overcome
anxiety, he discovered the unhappy Ceccato, and fi
his gloomy conjectures, he imagined his sons must h
perished under the Leads, either of grief or pestile
He stood for some moments absorbed, immovable,
as a shroud. At last he seemed to decide, and with
saying a word to Ceccato or his afflicted family,
went straight to the Procurator Cashier. He was
from accusing him of the unjust arrest of his s
Naturally submissive, he would have thought him
wanting in respect and affection for the laws, did
suspect a magistrate of error or prejudice. Displea
himself with his children, and quite ready to ch
them with idleness or insolence, according to the
cision of the Procurator, he wished at any pric
know what had become of them. He, therefore, hur
greeted the Procurator, the corpulent Cashier,
doubtless to preserve himself from the Plague, was
more wrapped up in self than ever. He found
surrounded with smelling bottles and aromatics o
kinds, intended to purify the air he breathed. E
ever, the ceremonious salutations of Sebastian see
to render him a little more tractable than usual.

"Well, well," said he, making a sign to him to
at a distance, and holding to his nose a large hand

ted with essence of juniper, "that's enough,
. Don't come too near, and keep your
By the horn, in this accursed time one
to whom one may be speaking! Are you
re not ill? Now, make haste; what is it
?

Highness," replied the old man, secretly a
fied by this cavalier reception, "secs before
idic of the painters, Messer Sebastian Zuc-
humble servant, father of——"

at's true," replied Melchior, without moving,
making a movement, as if to raise his languid
e black silk cap, which covered his large
"I did not recollect you, Messer Zuccato,
n honest man, but you have two violent
for your sons!"

ence, the term is rather severe, but I do not
ny sons are wild fellows, dissipated, obstinate
inions, and devoted to a vile and disgrace-
I know they are in disgrace both with the
strates and yourself. I am certain, there-
must have committed some great fault, since
ness to them has changed into severity, and
me to justify them, but to entreat that your
t may abate, and that your charity may take
leration the impurity of the air, the intense
season, and the feeble health of my eldest
the regimen of the prison must have already
y affected, that he will remember this punish-
expose himself to it no more."

ion is, indeed, ill, they tell me," replied the
. "But who is not in this melancholy time?
n really suffering, and without the extreme

care of my doctor, I should have peri
doubt;—but one must take precautions,
tions. By the Ducal Cap! I advise yc
cautions."

"Does your Excellency say that my
is ill?" said Sebastian alarmed.

"Oh! don't trouble yourself about th
more ill in prison than elsewhere. We
calculations, that on an average, no mor
under the Leads than in the other
Republic."

"Under the Leads, your Excellency!"
man, "Did you say under the Leads!
my sons are under the Leads?"

"By the Ducal Cap, there they are, a
deserved it by their roguery and extortic

"In Christ's name, Monsignor, you
frighten me," said Zuccato in a firm v
back, "my children cannot be under th

"They are there, I tell you," replied t
"and I can't take them out till their tri
soon as the Plague allows people to occu
with their business it will be looked afte
Ducal Cap, I fear their fate will be yet
are surely guilty, and there is perpetu
for the defrauders of the public revenue

"By the devil's body, Messer," cried
approaching the Procurator, "those wh
their throats, and those who have put
the Leads, shall repent of it whilst I ha
move a finger!"

"Keep off!" cried the Procurator, in
with alacrity, and moving his arm-ch

bring your breath so near my face. If you
pestilence, keep it, and go to the devil with
ally sons. I tell you they shall be hung if
avate the affair by making a noise about it.
Zuccati are downright scoundrels, on my word;
on the atmosphere, Messer, go out!"
speaking thus, Melchior kept moving further
l old Zuccato, immovable in his place, kept
g him with looks which actually froze him with

had the Plague," said he at last, with a gloomy
hould like to press in my arms all those who
Zuccati defrauders. I hope that such an idea
rred to no one, and that the magistrate to
have the honour of speaking, is at this time
ie influence of fever or delirium. Yes, yes,
ior, it is the pestilence which speaks in you,
u say that the Zuccati have misapplied the
ioney. Know that the Zuccati are of a noble
l that the blood flowing in their veins is purer
t of many ducal families. Know that Fran-
d Valerio are men who may be tortured, but
onoured. Your Signiory will do well to sum-
ir physician, for a mortal poison is indeed
ng in your blood!"
finished these terrible words, Sebastian hastily
Procurator, and hurried to the Ducal Palace.
ior rang his bell in agony, sent for his doctor,
iself bled, rubbed, and dosed, all night long,
believing the old man had given him the
by sorcery. He swooned away several times,
nearly *dead with fright*.

CHAPTER XVII.

Sebastian hastened to throw himself at the feet of the Doge, and demanded justice from him with all the eloquence of paternal love, and outraged honour. Mocenigo listened to him with kindness, and gave him marks of the highest esteem. He was afflicted at the long sufferings his sons had undergone, and took upon himself to transfer them to a less frightful prison. He even permitted the old man to see them every day, and lavish all the care his affection suggested; but he could not conceal from him that very heavy charges hung over them, and that their trial would be long and serious.

However, thanks to the earnest intercession of old Zuccato, to the influence of Titian, Tintoretto, and many other great masters, all friends to the Zuccati thanks also to the benevolent protection of the Doge, the Council of Ten, whose functions had been suspended by the Plague for some months, resumed their sittings, and the first affair which occupied their austere tribunal, was the trial of the Zuccati, accused of:—

1st.—Having misapplied their salary by producing works without solidity, for example, working out o season, (*fuor distogione,*) that is to say in times of frost when the mastic will not adhere, that they might make up for time lost, in fine weather, in promenades, dissipation, *and* debauchery of every description.

2nd.—Having produced figures which were both ill

drawn and strangely coloured, through persisting in working at night, in order still to make up for former idleness—(*ingordigia.*)

3rd.—Having produced this miserable work from entire ignorance of their trade, an ignorance which rendered Valerio Zuccato incapable of doing anything else but frivolous ornaments for the toilette of women and young people, (*cuffie, frastagli, vesture, etc.*) which puerile labours occupied him incessantly, and even became a lucrative profession at San Filippo, whilst the Republic paid dearly for work which he did not and could not do.

4th.—Having replaced by a shameful cheat, in many places, the pieces of enamel and stone, (*i pezzi,*) by wood and pasteboard merely painted, in order to display facieties of which mosaic work was not really susceptible—thereby attaining great credit as artists during their lives, but leaving behind them productions which could not survive them.

The articles of this strange trial may yet be found the archives of the ducal palace, and Signor Quadri extracted a faithful copy which may be read in an le entitled, "Of the Mosaic Workers," (*Dei ici,*) at the end of his excellent work upon ting in Venice.

e accusers were the Procurator-Cashier Melchior, lomeo Bozza, the three Bianchini, Jean Visentin everal others of their school—besides Claude de gio, organist of St Mark, who detested the noise workmen, and who would just as soon have in favour of the Zuccati, against the Bianchini, hope *that tired of these* quarrels and dilapida- *e government would* give up these expensive

restorations, whose principal inconvenienc
organist's eyes, was interrupting by its conti
the school for chanting, which he had establis
organ gallery.

The witnesses in favour of the Zuccati we
and his son Orazio, Tintoretto, Paul Verones
Ceccato, and the good priest Alberto Zio. All
before the council and testified to the great t
superior workmanship, the good conduct, ind
exact probity of the Zuccati and their school.

In their turn, the brothers Zuccati were
before the judges; Valerio supported in his
idolized brother, who was slowly recovering
long and cruel illness; feeble, broken d
apparently scarcely caring for the issue of
which he had not strength to support. Va
pale and worn. He had been furnished with
but his long beard and neglected hair, his
walk and convulsive trembling, spoke of his
and his grief.

Indifferent to his own sorrow, but indigna
injustice done to his brother, he at last looked
serious side of life. Anger and revenge sp
his countenance, and dark, fiery flames sho
eyes, hollowed by hunger, fatigue, and anxiet

On passing Bartolomeo Bozza to take his s
bench of the accused, he raised his arms, lo
fetters, as though he would have crushed hi
countenance glowing with fury seemed as t
would fain level him to the earth. The officers
forward, and he sat down, holding Francesco'
his own cold trembling grasp.

"*Francesco* Zuccato," said the judge,

accused of robbery and fraud towards the Republic. What have you to reply to the charge?"

"I reply," said Francesco, "that I might as well be accused of murder and parricide, if it pleased the fancy of my persecutors."

"And I," cried Valerio, rising impetuously, "I reply that we lay under the weight of an infamous accusation, and that we have languished for three months under the Leads, whence my brother has come out in a dying state, because the Bianchini hate us, and that Bozza our pupil is a scoundrel, but above all because the Procurator Monsignor Melchior has made a fault in his Latin which we allowed ourselves to correct It is the first time two citizens were ever sent to the Leads for refusing to commit a barbarism!"

The violence of the younger Zuccati was not calculated to conciliate the magistrates. Old Sebastian seeing the bad effect of his harangue, rose and said:

"Be quiet my son, you are speaking both insolently and foolishly. It is not thus, that an honest citizen ought to defend himself before the fathers of his country. Monsignors, excuse his ravings. These young men are affected by the fever—Examine their cause with your impartial justice, if they are culpable, punish them without pity; their father will be the first to praise this act of justice and bless the laws whose severity represses fraud. Were it necessary to shed their blood myself, I would do it, venerable fathers, rather than see the august power of the Republic fall into discredit. But if they are innocent, of which I have the utmost certainty, render them prompt and generous mercy, *for behold my eldest scarcely breathes the breath of life, and the younger you see yourselves*

is under the influence of delirium." Speaking thus old man fell upon his knees, and tears streamed do his long white beard.

"Sebastian Zuccato," said the judge, "your prob and loyalty are well known to the Republic, you sp as a good father, and a good citizen, but if you h nothing else to say for your sons, you must r retire."

At a sign from the magistrate, the "Familiar," w had introduced Sebastian, led him away. The old m as he retired threw a look of despair upon his so then turning for the last time towards the judges, joi his hands, and raised his eyes towards heaven with agonized an expression that it might have touched marble pillars of the hall, but the Council of Ten seem even colder and more inflexible.

After the three Bianchini had supported their ac sation by oath, Bozza was summoned to give his e dence, and putting his hand upon the crucifix held to him, he said:

"I swear by Christ that I have passed three mon under the Leads, because I would not bear false witne A shudder of surprise passed through the assem Melchior frowned, Bianchini the Red ground teeth, and the young Valerio, hastily rising cried " Is it possible, my unfortunate pupil, that I may pity and esteem you? Ah! that thought softens my woes."

"Be quiet, Valerio Zuccato," said the judge, "l let the witness speak."

Bartolomeo looked as weak and ill as the Zucc He had also suffered the slow torture of captiv *He declared* that some days before St. Mark, Vine

ad conducted him to the scaffolding of
to show him, and make him examine
of the work, where pasteboard was
sed instead of enamel, and that he had
him before the Procurator-Cashier, before
e indignation and sincerity of his heart, he
to the fact. Since that time, convinced
ıith of the Zuccati, he had not wished to be
ce in work which must meet with condem-
he had therefore laboured in the school of
ni. But on St. Mark's Eve, Vincent, having
him before the Procurator, wished him to
he had been an eye witness of the fact,
fused; because, although he had seen the
e had not seen the fraud actually committed.
n it," said he, "I should not have waited
ing of the Bianchini to quit the studio of
but I had never seen anything of the kind.
the slightest fact occurred in the conduct
ers to render the truth of the discovery we
de even probable. It was therefore impos-
ar by Christ that I had seen them employ
and the paint-brush. When Vincent Bian-
that I did not accede to his designs, he
ry, and accused me of collision with the
Monsignor Melchior menaced me so strongly,
irritation I warned him to beware of the
That very evening I was arrested, and
o the Leads. Since then I have imagined
sters were innocent, and that a man capable
ıe to take a false oath, was also capable of
ng the *night, unknown* both to the Zuccati
one else, destroyed a part of the Mosaic,

and substituted pasteboard or wood for s
to ruin them. I must also declare that th
is made with so much art, that unless
scratched, it would be impossible to perc

Bozza delivered his testimony with a fi
a Bolognese pronunciation, very slowly
tinctly. Pressed to explain himself as to
diversions to which Valerio yielded, he o
young master was often admonished by
ther for indolence and dissipation, and
make up for lost time by working at
might give colour to the reproach of hav
(*fuor di stagione*) work without solidity. E
that Valerio did not understand the busin
his brother, and made many ornaments an
on his own account. In a word it was ea
his evidence was not influenced by frien
Zuccati, and that he would not have been
have injured them by speaking the truth
had a horror of the deceit into which h
been drawn, and that he would never
Bianchini for having caused him to be cc
the Leads.

The council closed the sitting of the da
a committee of painters, charged with the
under the eyes of the Procurators, of the
of the two rival schools. The committee w
of Titian, Tintoretto, Paul Veronese, Jac
and Andrea Schiavone, who from that ti
named Medola, from the pains he took
mosaic even to its very marrow.

CHAPTER XVIII.

day these illustrious masters, accompanied
kpeople, the Procurators, and the Fami-
Holy Office, went to St. Mark, and pro-
e examination of the Mosaic work. At the
request they commenced by their genealo-
of the Virgin, an immense undertaking,
een executed in very little time. Vincent
vices an unbearable vanity. Greedy of praise,
Titian step by step, waiting for the explo-
admiration. Beside him walked Dominic
s eye sparkling with all the assurance of
ipidity. Nevertheless Titian did not ex-
inion. Always *spirituel* and courteous, he
say things which marked attention and
thout compromising in any manner his
s a connoisseur. His polished attitudes,
is smiles, formed a contrast with the dark-
ind austere countenance of Tintoretto. Al-
intimate perhaps with the Zuccati, Robusti
re indignant at the conduct of their rivals
was. In the mind of Titian, who often
rofound hatred and implacable antipathies,
: of the Bianchini found, if not an excuse,
ore indulgent consideration, from the jealou-
: and artistic ambition. Perhaps also Tin-
ollecting the persecution he had himself
m Titian, *wished* to convey to him, by in-
ion, a legitimate reproach, by displaying

his horror and contempt for such proceedings. He left the chapel of St. Isidore without unclosing his lips, and without once turning his eyes upon those who accompanied him.

But when beneath the great dome, he had under observation the work of the Zuccati, he burst forth into eloquent admiration; his fine, though severe features lighted up with enthusiasm, and he displayed all he perfections of the work with generous warmth. Titian, who was an intimate friend of old Sebastian, and who had given many excellent lessons to the young Zuccati, added to these praises, without however depreciating the productions of the Bianchini, in which respect he displayed great prudence. But the Procurator-Cashier, vexed at the success of the Zuccati, commenced with:—

"Messers, I would beg you to observe that we have not come here to see productions in painting, but productions in mosaic. It matters very little to the state whether the Virgin's hand be modelled according to the rules of your art; it matters little whether the calf of St. Isidore's leg be placed a litttle too high or too low. All that is very well to talk about . . . . "

"How say you! by Christ," cried Titian, who on hearing such blasphemy, quite forgot his prudent courtesy, "it matters little to the state whether the mosaists understand design, or whether mosaic be an elegant and faithful representation of the painters' works? It is the first time I ever heard of such a doctrine, Monsignor, and it needs all the respect your judgment inspires to convince me of the truth of such a theory."

Nothing fixed the erroneous convictions of the Procurator like contradiction.

I, Messer Titian," cried he warmly, "will sus-
all that is nothing but puerile minutiæ and
hese are nothing but the quarrels of a school,
liscussions of a workshop, and the gravity of
stracy ought not to be compromised therein.
d by the Republic with watching over its in-
ıd carrying economy into its public expendi-
Procurator will never allow the workmen of
to fail in their engagements in order to enjoy
pleasure of amusing those who may be ama-
ıainting."

not think," said Francesco, casting a mourn-
ɜ at his productions, "that I could fail in my
ents, by correcting as far as possible the de-
ıy figures, and conscientiously conforming to
les of my art."

ow all the rules of your art as well as you
cried the Procurator, crimson with anger,
l never make me believe that a mosaist need
ter. The Republic pays you to be a faithful
le copier of the painters' sketches, and pro-
ı fasten your stones properly, and with nicety,
ll, provided you know how to employ good
, and to produce the effects of which they are
it matters very little whether you know the
design and the laws of painting. By the
ıp, if you were great artists, the Republic might
ore economical. It would then have no need
lesser Vecelli and Messer Robusti to design
oons. You might be left free to compose,
and trace your subjects. Unfortunately, we
yet sufficient *confidence* in your knowledge
g to trust so entirely to it."

"And yet, Monsignor," said Titian, vered his self-command, and knew how cious expression to the smile of conten his lips, "I must object to your Exce order to copy a design faithfully, one m designer; if not, the cartoons of Rap confided to the first comer, and a good from would suffice to produce a great a exactly so, and your Signiory will permi it, with all the respect I owe to your o is one thing to govern mankind by sublin quite another to amuse them by frivolou should be much embarrassed, we poor were obliged, like your Signiory, to hol the State with a firm, yet generous gras

"But you contend, flatterer," said the curator, "that as to painting and mo more than we do. But at least you will solidity is an indispensible quality in work, and if, instead of employing marble, or enamel, pasteboard, wood, oi made use of, then you will confess tha the Republic have not reached their tru

At this Titian felt a little embarrass not know how far this assertion of the Bi be well-founded, and he feared to co Zuccati by an imprudent admission.

"I should at least deny," said he, aft hesitation, "that such a substitution of n constitute fraud, since it has been pro that the paint-brush may be used, in *with as much* solidity as enamel."

"*Well that is* what we shall see M

ıe Procurator, "for we would not wish to suspect ıtegrity in the affair. Bring sand and sponges ınd by the Ducal Cap, let all these panels be well l."

ıcesco's almost expiring eyes brightened, and with a contemptuous hatred towards the inscrip- here the word *saxis* replaced the barbarism *saxi*- It was evident that if he was to be condemned for teration of a letter, he should at least be con- by the public exposure of the ignorant Procura- ılunder. Melchior understood his thought, and ed the proof to be turned to some other part of ıme.

ı mosaic of the Zuccati, rubbed and washed at point, stood the trial perfectly, and no part was ered which fell or even threatened to fall. The rator began to fear that the blind hatred of the hini, and his own prejudices, had involved him in air which would not redound to his honour, but nt Bianchini, approaching the two archangels, ım one was the portrait of Valerio, and the other ancesco Zuccato, said with assurance. "It is n that wood and pasteboard may resist sand and ıp sponge; but it is not so certain that they can the action of time, and behold the proof,"—so ; he drew his dagger, and thrusting it into the l breast of the archangel which represented esco Zuccato, just at the heart, he detached a l of something the colour of flesh, which he cut o pieces with the blade, and presented to the ırators. The fragment passed from hand to hand, ı himself was obliged to agree that it was nothing morsel *of wood.*

prudence belonging to men, devoted to other gc
money or favour. By accusing us of fraud, w
been forced to renounce this prudence, this m
We demand, in consequence, that it be proved, v
we have tried this innovation any where exce
composition which had not even been ordered f
and which we are ready to efface from the Cath
the Government declare it unworthy to stand
side of the productions of the Bianchini."

The plans of the different compositions desi
the painters and confided to the Mosaists were c
ed, but the two figures of archangels were not
The Procurator Melchior pressed each of the
to express his opinion upon the merit of the
and his share in its production. As in this
they had been invested with full and entire po
the state, a single sketch traced by one of them
have sufficed to prove the Zuccati, who were b
execute their instructions literally, guilty of fa
ness, disobedience, and fraud, in employing a
of their own choice, and materials not approvec
Commission of Procurators. The painters
declared that they had never even had the idea
figures, and as to their merit, they affirmed th
themselves could not create anything more co
more noble. Titian was twice interrogated
friendship for the Zuccati was well known, and
finesse, and skill in evading any questions to w
did not wish to reply. When summoned to s
were the author of these figures, he replied wit
"I would willingly be so, but on my conscience
not even seen the design, and I did not even
their existence before the examination which

ıake, as a member of the Commission."
chini still declared that the Zuccati were
of themselves composing such excellent
Notwithstanding the painter's declara-
r enquiry was instituted when Bozza was
oned, as an old pupil of the Zuccati, to say
er seen any painter put his hand to these
e deposed that he had once seen Messer
ılli, Titian's son come by night to the
the Zuccati whilst they were yet labour-
m. Orazio was heard, and attested on
ıe had never even seen them, and that
night to the workshop at San Filippo,
ıer object than to order from Valerio a
nosaic work to give to a lady. Thus there
proof against the Zuccati—they were ac-
:harged with replacing at their own expense
s of stone or enamel, the pieces of coloured
ved in various parts of their figures. This
ecree was nothing but a form in order not to
nnovations. Its execution was not even
the coloured fragments of wood still exist.
ıtor's barbarism has been reinstated just as
m the learned brain of the Magistrate, and
wo archangels may be read the following
cription alluding to the persecutions suf-
Zuccati.

UBI DILIGENTER
IPEXERIS ARTEMQ AC LABO-
M FRANSCISCI ET VALERII
CATI VENETORVM FRATRVM
SOVERIS *TVM DEMVM* IVDI-
O.

CHAPTER XX.

Notwithstanding the happy issue of
was to be done before the Zuccati's
assume a happy aspect. Francesco was
health but slowly. No new public work
to the mosaists. It was even proposed
and preserve the byzantine mosaics; for
the day were becoming austere, and wh
laws were ordering into mourning eve
every gondola, even those, the least incl
by nature, affected, in imitation, to clo
in the Roman toga, and only to wear i
ornaments. Economy was in every on
Pestilence had put a stop to trade, and
pass from one extreme to the other, sor
and puerile reforms were now the ord
The artists suffered deeply from this per
panic. The Procurator-Cashier was no
stance of folly, but the representative of
minds.

Francesco had fallen into a state of pr
ragement. A most enthusiastic artist, h
he had hoped, for glory. He had se
serves a noble mistress, by noble sacrifi
dent and exclusive worship. For his or
he had seen himself exposed to a fright
minent death, and a disgraceful trial.
this, the success of his *chef d'œvres* was
do not see with impunity misfortune fa

r. In their mediocrity they feel bewil-
k by all means to legitimize and justify
hich he is overwhelmed.
sufficient that a piece of wood had been
of the productions of the Zuccati, for
hink that all their mosaic was executed
e citizens even went so far as to say it
paper, and convinced of its want of so-
uld have imagined themselves wanting
ad they even raised their heads to ex-
auty of the figures. The young artist
ded in his inmost soul, and suffered the
he carefully concealed his feelings, and
ublic too much to allow it the satisfaction
overcome. Retired in his little chamber
o, he passed his days at the window,
d thoughts, and had no other distraction
than watching the long climbing plants
urt blown about by the wind. This calm
l him with delight, after the confinement
where the want of air had been slowly
his life.
s of his good fortune, and expensive
Valerio had contracted some considera-
s creditors tormented him. Francesco
and devoted all his savings to their pay-
o did not know it till some time after,
ful enough, without remorse adding its
that which the failing health of his idol-
caused him. The idea of losing him
is strength of mind, and he felt that,
g his natural disposition to think lightly

of life's evils, he could never be cc
Incapable of melancholy, too energ
or for despair, he gave way often t
dignation, to which succeeded t
dreams of glory and happiness, alt
than himself had need of glory
Sebastian conjured them in vain to
and renounce the low profession of
cesco had suffered too rude a shock
to new hopes. To try a new career
too much resolution for a frame so
so deeply wounded. To his own s
those of his friends; his disgrace h
privilege of mastership; he and M
guishing in destitution; and in v
solicit for payment for his year's wc

The finances, like all other parts
tion, were in the greatest disorder.
were useless, he was put off from
week to week. The secret hatred
Cashier was the principal cause of
ment. It was his dull vengeance
irony, which, in his opinion, had n
punished by the Council.

The Zuccati were resolved to sha
of bread with their faithful appre
ported Marini, Ceccato, his young
ing her health, and her last child.
a little money from the Greeks a
jewels to them, but this resource w
so numerous a family, when the l
savings had vanished. Valerio l
himself for having saved nothing, a

:e is a vice. "Yes," said he, sighing, who spends in vain pleasures, and empty price of his labour, deserves no friends, ives himself of the power of assisting them of their distress."

wonderful to see with what indefatigable at ingenuous devotion he repaired his past divided his own small lodgings into three workshop, the eating room, and Francesco's He himself slept upon a mat in any corner, on the terrace of his dwelling. In the day rked assiduously, and employed his apprenesh mosaic work, hoping that a time might the monuments of art would no longer be objects of mere luxury or fantasy. He took elf all the household cares, and if he allowed vife to prepare the dinner, he would never o fatigue herself with going to purchase it. imself to the fish market, to the vegetable the *frittole*, and he might often be seen, sweat on his brow, traversing the bye- a basket under his mantle. If he met any ung patricians, who had once shared his ice and amusements, he carefully avoided obstinately concealed his penury, lest they id him succour, the mere offer of which e humiliated him. He affected to have lost his gaiety, but the forced laugh upon his the fiery glances from eyes now bright only and excitement, could only deceive a comlship or pre-occupied minds. One day as s returning *through* a small dark and silent *h served as a* passage, he saw endeavour-

ing to sustain himself against the damp wall, man who seemed ready to sink through weakne He approached, and supported him in his arm But what was his surprise when he recognized this man, covered with rags, and worn down l hunger, and whom he had taken for a beggar, his o pupil, Bartolomeo Bozza.

"Then there are in Venice," exclaimed he, "artis yet more unhappy than myself."

He made him swallow a little of the Istrian wine, which he had a bottle in his basket, and then ga him some figs, which the unfortunate being seiz with a voracity which did not allow him even to reje the skin. When his hunger was a little appeased, l recognized the charitable man who had assisted hi A flood of tears fell from his eyes, but Valerio cou never understand whether it was shame, remorse, gratitude, which made them flow, for Bozza utter not a word, and turned as though to go away. B the kind-hearted Valerio stopped him.

"Where would you go, unhappy one?" said h "do not you feel that you have not recovered yo strength, and that you will sink again in a few m ments. I am poor also, and cannot offer you mone but come with me, and your old friends will recei you with open arms, and whilst there is a measure rice at San Filippo, you shall share it with us."

He drew him on as he spoke, and Bozza yield mechanically, without showing either joy or surprize

CHAPTER XXI.

could not repress a feeling of repugnance
made his appearance; he knew that this
although incapable of a base or dishonest
no benevolence, no affection, no generous
in his heart. All suggestions of tenderness,
ny were overpowered in him by his uncon-
ıride and insatiable ambition. Nevertheless,
ıeard from Valerio the state in which he had
zza, he ran to seek some of his own clothes,
of his best robes, and offered them to him,
alerio prepared for him a substantial meal.
ıt moment Bozza formed part of the indigent
hich still through order, economy, and labour,
nourably at San Filippo. Valerio did not
ı own hard work, and every evening when he
ıs old scholars meet at his humble repast, his
ıed once more to joy, and he gave himself up
But when Francesco anxiously met Bozza's
never expressed anything but indifference or
Bozza could not even comprehend the heroic
of the Zuccati. He understood their noble-
ul so little, that he attributed it to motives of
advantage, to a design of founding a new
nd of experimenting on the work of their
es, and binding them by such services that they
engage themselves to a rival studio. Thus
line of conduct which his companions, and

with justice, thought sublime, to him seemed simply a skilful calculation.

But their destitution became yet more pressing. The Zuccati had resolved to bear the severest privations rather than have recourse to the illustrious masters whose friendship they possessed. Their father's fortune was very moderate; and his pride had always made him refuse any assistance from his sons, placed, according to his ideas, in so low a condition of life. In their prosperous days, they had devoted a part of their salary to him, but in order to make him accept of it, Titian had been obliged to send it in his own name. Now that the Zuccati could no longer assist their father, Titian himself continued the pension, and the grateful sons concealed their misery through fear of trespassing upon his generosity.

Happily, Tintoretto still watched over them, though he himself was at this time much embarrassed.

Art seemed to have fallen into discredit. The brotherhoods paid their *ex voto* at as little expense as possible, and it was even proposed to dispose of all the pictures in the schools, and give the proceeds to the poor workmen of the Corporations. The patricians concealed their luxury in the seclusion of their palaces, that they might not be rendered liable to too heavy taxes for the relief of the poor. Nevertheless, Tintoretto still found means to benefit his unfortunate friends. Unknown to them, he procured the disposal of many of the ornaments they made, and did not cease importuning the Senate to give them employment. At last he succeeded in proving the necessity for *further reparations* of the Cathedral. A certain number *of the ancient* Byzantine Mosaics (those which are still

. Mark's) were capable of being preserved,
s necessary to remove them entirely, and
em upon new cement. Many parts were
parable, and must be replaced by new com-
before the whole was quite destroyed, which
e occasioned far greater expense. The Senate
on these reparations, and voted supplies for
nplishment; but also decided upon reducing
r of Mosaic workers, and that in future, to
to all rivalry, there should be but one chief
hool. The Chief of the schools was to be he,
r a trial of all the workmen before employed,
ssion of Painters should declare to be the most
l his school was to be formed, not from his
, according to his or his family's interests,
ing to the degree of talent displayed by the
petitors for the prize. There was to be a
prize, a second prize, and four accessory
l the number of masters was limited to six.
mmission was named, and consisted of the
ters who had examined the productions of
i and the Bianchini. The competition was
the proposed subject was a Mosaic picture,
g St. Jerome. At the same time that Tin-
ried these happy news to the Zuccati, he was
arer of the hundred ducats which were due
r their year's labour, which he had at last
in obtaining. This unexpected victory over
o sad and terrible, revived the expiring en-
th Francesco and Bozza, but in a widely
anner, for whilst Francesco embraced his
l *his beloved* apprentices, Bozza, uttering a
re cry of joy, like that of the sea eagle,

darted out of the workshop, and did not re-appear. His first action was to run to the Bianchini, and to explain to them their respective situations. Bozza felt hatred and contempt for the Bianchini, but he felt that he could make use of them. It was evident to him that either from partiality or justice, the productions of Francesco and his pupils would be esteemed the first at the examination. The Bianchini were mere workmen, and certainly would only be admitted to work under orders in the future undertakings of the Senate. Besides, Bozza knew that the state of languor and illness of Francesco, would not permit him to labour. He imagined that Valerio would himself produce the two compositions ordered from the Zuccati, that even the apprentices must assist in them, for the time allowed was short, and the Commission wished to judge of the promptitude as well as the knowledge of the competitors. He flattered himself in the depths of his soul, that he could contend against their whole school. During his last stay at San Filippo, he had studied design atttentively, and sought to learn all the secrets of colour and outline, which, Valerio, had of his own accord naively and generously communicated.

Although hoping to surpass the Zuccati, Bozza was not blind to the difficulty of supplanting Francesco whose name was already illustrious, whilst his was yet unknown. To displace him, it was necessary that the Procurators should be able to intimidate the painter by the intrigues and menaces of Melchior. At present they were favourable to the Bianchini, who had grossly flattered them, by declaring that they knew much more *about painting* and mosaic than Titian or Tintoret. *Resolved to* struggle against the talent of the Zuccati

ıad now only to make the Bianchini favourable
He did it, by showing them that they could
vithout him, because they were absolutely igno-
he rules of drawing, and that their works would
y be dismissed from the competition, if they did
ł their superintendence to him. This insolent
on did not wound the Bianchini as much as
xpected. Money was even dearer to them than
ınd the coldness of the painters towards them,
ıst examination, had given them great fears for
re. They therefore accepted Bozza's offer, and
ısented to advance him ten ducats. With the
this sum, he immediately ran to purchase a
ıe chain, which he sent to the Zuccati, and which
oo threw round his brother's neck, without
ţ from whom it came.
l sides work went on with ardour. But Fran-
ranimated for an instant by hope, reckoned too
pon his strength, and again overcome by fever,
few days was obliged to interrupt his own work,
erintend from his bed the labours of his school.

CHAPTER XXII.

This relapse caused such deep mortificatio
lerio that he felt compelled to abandon his
withdraw from the competition. Francesc
was alarming, and the anguish he felt at the
his interrupted *chef d'œuvre* augmented his phy
ferings. These were increased when Cecc
thoughtlessly told him one day, that she had s
in the Bianchini's workshop. This trait of in
seemed to him so black that he wept with in
and suffered a fresh attack of fever. Valer
him so tormented, pretended that Nina m
been mistaken, and that he would himself g
it sure. He could scarcely believe in so mu
sibility on the part of one, with whom, after
grievances, he had shared his last resources.
to San Fantino, where the Bianchini's work
situated, and saw through the half-opened do
occupied in directing the young Antonio. H
him, and having drawn him to some distanc
reproached him with his conduct.

"When I saw you so hastily depart the ot
said he, "I well understood that at the firs
personal success, your old friends would beco
gers; in that I recognized the egotism of t
and my brother endeavoured to excuse it
that glory is a passion so imperious, that all
before it; but between egotism and malice,
ingratitude and perfidy, there is a distan

:t you would have overstepped so lightly.
› you, Bartolomeo, you have given me a
sson, and have made me doubt the sacred
ienefits."

not of benefits, Messer," replied Bozza,
ne, "I have accepted none. You succoured
hopes of my being useful to you. For my-
not wish to be useful to you, and I have paid
ur services by a gift, the value of which far
:he expense which you have incurred for me."
g thus, Bozza looked and pointed at the
:rio wore round his neck. No sooner did Va-
rstand what he meant, than he tore it off so
hat it broke into several pieces.
ossible," cried he, repressing tears of mingled
l anger, "is it possible that you have had the
› send me a present?"
. thing done every day," replied Bozza, "I
ay the civility you have shewn in receiving
am even obliged to you for not having felt
:y as to the advances you have made for my
:nt."
' said Valerio, clasping the chain in his
hand, and fixing on Bozza eyes which
with fury, "you took my workshop for a
id you thought that I kept open table on
n? It is thus you appreciate my sacrifices,
on to unfortunate brethren! Even, when to
ime to work, I myself prepared your dinner,
ne for your cook!"

no such ideas," replied Bozza coldly, "I
ıu wished to bind an artist whom you thought
t talent; and to free myself by rewarding

you, I have sent you a gift. Is not that the custom?"

At these words Valerio, exasperated, threw the chain violently in his face. Bozza was struck near the eye, and the blood flowed.

"You will answer to me for this insult," said he coolly, "if I restrain myself here, it is because one word from me would send ten poniards to your heart. We shall meet again, I hope?"

"Doubt it not," replied Valerio.

And they parted.

Returning home, Valerio met Tintorètto, and related to him all that had just occurred. He also told him of Francesco's relapse. The master was sincerely grieved, but seeing that Valerio was thoroughly discouraged, he took care not to give him that vulgar consolation which only embitters mortification, in ardent spirits. On the contrary he affected to share his fears for the future, and to regard Bozza as quite capable of surpassing him in the competition, and also of so well superintending the Bianchini's school, that it would carry away the prize from the Zuccati.

"That is indeed sad to think of," added he, "these are men who know nothing in fact of art, but thanks to a young man who knew nothing of it likewise a short time since, thanks to the perseverance and assiduity which often serve instead of genius, the finest talents will perhaps be obliged to seek the shade, whilst ignorance, or at any rate, bad taste, will sway the sceptre. Adieu to art! behold the days of its decline are at hand."

"The evil is perhaps not unavoidable, my dear *master*," exclaimed Valerio, stimulated by this feigned *depression*. "Thank God, the trial is not come yet,

and Bozza has not yet produced his *chef d'œuvre*."

"I will not conceal from you," replied Tintoretto, "that his commencement is very fine, I glanced at it yesterday, when passing San Fantino, and I was surprised, for I did not think Bozza capable of such a design. His pupil, young Antonio, is full of talent, and besides, Bartolomeo retouches his attempt so minutely that he will not leave a fault. He also directs the other two, and the Bianchini are such servile copyists, that with a good master they are capable of designing well, by the mere instinct of imitation, without any knowledge of drawing."

"But, master," said Valerio anxiously, "you would not give the prize to charlatans, to the injury of the true servants of art? Neither would Messer Titian?"

"My son, in this contest, we are not called upon to judge men, but their productions, and for more security, it is probable that the names will be out of the question. Besides, you are aware that it is customary to give judgment without seeing the signature of any work. An officer covers the name with paper, before submitting the picture to us. This custom is a symbol of the impartiality by which our judgments ought to be dictated. If Bozza surpasses you, my heart will bleed, but my lips will declare the truth. If the Bianchini triumph, I shall think that imposture wins the day over fidelity, vice over virtue; but I am not the Inquisitor, and I have only to judge whether portions of enamel be more or less well arranged in a framework."

"I know that well, master," replied Valerio a little piqued, "but why do you *think* that the school of the Zaccati *will not force you to* accord the palm to them?

Such at least is their intention. Who asks for a culpable partiality? We would not wish it, even supposing we could obtain it from you."

"You appear to me, so much discouraged, my poor Valerio, and you have such an enormous undertaking to accomplish, if Francesco's health be not shortly re-established, that in truth I am alarmed at the position in which you are placed. Besides, Francesco being ill, does your school still exist? You are a skilful master, you are endowed with a marvellous facility, and inspiration seems to hover round you. But have you not always turned your back on glory? Are you not insensible to the applause of a crowd? Do not you prefer the seductions of pleasure, or the *dolce far niente*, to titles, riches, and honours? You are a man admirably gifted, my young master. Your intelligence can overcome all things, but it must not be concealed, that you are not an artist. You disdain the strife, you despise the stake, you are too disinterested even to descend into the arena. Bozza, with but the hundredth part of your genius, will sooner gain all by ambition, by perseverance, and by his very hardness of heart."

"You are perhaps right, master," said Valerio, who had listened to this discourse with a thoughtful air. "I thank you for having expressed your fears to me; they are the effects of your kind solicitude, and I think they are too well founded. Nevertheless, master, we shall see! Adieu."

Speaking thus, Valerio, according to the custom of the time and country, kissed the hand of the illustrious *master*, and with light steps crossed the Rialto.

CHAPTER XXIII.

peet everything on returning to his studio.
. with energy, spoke loudly, hummed the
drinking song in rather a gloomy tone, said
gs in a tender manner, broke his tools, ridi-
pupils, and approaching his brother's couch,
:ed him passionately, saying, with an air half
.f inspired, "Be easy, Checo, you will soon be
. shall have the first prize, we will produce a
ure at the competition, come, come, nothing is
muse has not yet flown back to her native
"

esco looked at him astonished.
at is the matter with you?" said he, "you speak
y. What has happened? Have you quarrelled
y one? Have you met the Bianchini?"
lain yourself, master, tell us what has passed,"
Marini. "If I may believe some reports, I
ot help hearing this morning, Bozza's picture
dy far advanced, and it is said will prove a
ure; this is what torments you, master, but
e yourself, our efforts . . . . "
mented, I!" cried Valerio, "and how long
ve I been acustomed to torment myself when
ny pupils distinguished himself. At what pe-
my life have you ever seen me disquieted or
by the success or triumph of an artist? Really!
envious! I! is *it so?*"
erefore this sensitiveness my good master?"

said Ceccato. "Which of us ever had such an idea? But tell us, we beg you, whether it be true, that Bozza has outlined an admirable composition?"

"Undoubtedly," said Valerio, smiling, and suddenly resuming his ordinary gaiety and gentleness, "he ought to be able to do it, for I have given him sufficiently good rules. Well, what makes you all look so mournful? What is the matter now? One would think you were so many willows drooping over a dried up fountain! Let me see, what can be the matter? Has Nina forgotten the dinner? Has the Procurator-Cashier dictated a new barbarism? Come, my children, to work! there is not a day to be lost, nay, not even an hour, quick, quick, the tools! the enamels! the boxes! and let every one surpass himself, for Bozza is doing great things, and we must do greater still!"

From this moment joy and activity returned to the little workshop of San Filippo. Francesco seemed to return to life by seeing in all these friendly faces, the gleam of hope and sacred joy, which had already produced the master pieces of the cupola of St. Mark. Doubt had for a moment oppressed these young heads, like a leaden dome weighing upon laughing Caryatides; but Valerio had chased it away with a single pleasantry. The intense energy of his will was concentrated within himself, and was only manifested by an overflowing gaiety. But an important change had taken place in Valerio, he was no longer the same man. Although not infected by the spirit of vanity, although not become one of those jealous minds who *cannot endure the glory* or triumph of another, yet he *had become religiously* devoted to his profession; his

character had become serious, under an appearance of gaiety. Misfortune had wounded him in the most sensitive part of his soul, by affecting those dearest to him, and proving to him by severe lessons, the advantages of prudence. He had just learned the reason of the state of poverty in which Francesco was left after his trial, notwithstanding the economy and regularity of his life. When Valerio discovered in his brother's coffer, the acquittances of all his own creditors, he wept like the prodigal son. Great souls have often great defects, but they conquer them, and by this they are distinguished from the vulgar herd. Valerio, after this time, however rich, never departed from the rules of moderation and simplicity he now, in the depths of his heart, imposed upon himself. He never even mentioned this discovery nor his resolution to any one; but his gratitude to Francesco was proved by the devotion of his whole life, and his firmness of purpose by a morality proof against every temptation.

Serene joy, cheerful industry, songs and laughter, again woke the sleeping echoes of the little workshop. The winter was very severe, but there was no want of wood, and every one had a handsome robe made of cloth, trimmed with zibeline, and a warm velvet doublet. Francesco's strength increased as though by magic, Nina recovered her health and beauty, and became pregnant with a second infant, the expectation of which consoled her for the loss of her first-born. The child who had survived the Pestilence grew wonderfully, and the little Marietta Robusti, his godmother, often came to play with him in the workshop of the Zuccati. This charming girl showed a naive interest in the labours of her youthful friends, and already

showed great capabilities of appreciating their merits.

The eventful day at last arrived, and all the pictures were carried into the sacristy of St. Mark, where the examining committee were assembled. San Sovino had been joined to the artists previously named.

Valerio had done his utmost, and a lively hope reigned in his bosom. He went to the competition, with that noble confidence which does not exclude the truest modesty. He loved art for itself, he was happy in having done justice to his own conceptions, and no human injustice could deprive him of this innocent satisfaction. Francesco was visibly agitated, but without false shame, hatred, or jealousy. His pale, but beautiful countenance, his delicate and trembling lips, his bearing, at once timid and proud, deeply interested all the members of the Commission. All desired to award the prize to him, but their attention was diverted by the appearance of a man so worn, so painfully agitated, so convulsively bent, whilst paying his salutations, half fearfully, half insolently, that they were at first startled, as one often is by the aspect of a madman. Soon, however, Bozza recovered his *sang-froid*, and assumed a more becoming manner, but he felt every moment ready to swoon.

The mosaists waited in an adjoining room, whilst the painters proceeded to the examination of their productions. After an hour's time, which to Bozza seemed an age, they were summoned, and Tintoretto, stepping forward to meet them, begged them to seat themselves in silence. The silence was not difficult to obtain. His austere countenance gave no hint of that which each one longed so ardently to discover. All *felt oppressed,* respired with difficulty, and their hearts

beat violently. When seated in their appointed place, Titian, as chief of the Commission, placing himself near the pictures, which were ranged in a line upon the wall, read the following formula, with a firm and sonorous voice:

"We, Vecelli, surnamed Titian, Jacopo Robusti, surnamed Tintoretto, Jacopo Sansovino, Jacopo Pistoja, Andrea Schiavone, Paolo Veronese, all masters in painting, acknowledged by the Senate, and the honourable and fraternal Corporation of Painters, commissioned by the glorious Republic of Venice, and nominated by the venerable Council of Ten, to the functions of judges of the works presented at this competition; with the help of God, the light of reason, and integrity of heart, have examined attentively, conscientiously, and impartially, the said productions, and have unanimously declared alone worthy of being promoted to the chief mastership and direction of all the under-mentioned masters, the author of the picture upon which we have inscribed No. I., with the Seal of the Commission. This picture, of the name of whose author we are entirely ignorant, faithful to our oath of not reading the signatures before we pronounce our opinion as to the respective merits, will now be displayed to your eyes and to ours."

At the same moment, Tintoretto withdrew the veil which covered the picture, and took away the band which concealed the signature. A cry of joy escaped Francesco. The successful picture was his brother's. Valerio, who had never in his wildest hopes, expected more than the second prize, was dumb with surprise, and only *yielded to his* own delight when he witnessed *the transport of his* brother.

The second picture crowned was that of
and the third that of Bozza. But when
who pitied his anguish, and imagined he sh
great joy upon him, turned round, expect
him, like the others, rise and uncover him
forced to summon him three times. Bozz
motionless, his arms crossed on his bres
against the wall, and his head sunk upon
The third prize was too far below his amb
teeth were so firmly closed, and his limbs so
that he was obliged to be almost carried aw
competition.

The last prizes were given to Ceccato, Gi
Bianchini, and Marini. The two other
failed, but the Republic afterwards emp
when it became evident that the numbe
mosaists had been too much limited. But
were assigned to them in establishments
were no longer in contact or rivalship with t
and thenceforward their hatred became u
erless.

CHAPTER XXIV.

e conclusion of the sitting, Titian exhorted laureates, not to fancy that they had arrived on, but to study long and faithfully the mo- old masters, and the cartoons of the painters. ain," said he, " that at the sight of brilliant skilfully put together, and bearing a coarse e to objects of worship, the vulgar crowd and adore; it is in vain that prejudiced y that Mosaic is capable of attaining to the lesign of fresco painting; let those amongst el by what different sentiments they have r suffrages, and surpassed their competitors, n the love of virtue and the study of nature; se who have committed the error of working y rule and settled conviction profit by their give themselves sincerely up to study. It o late to abjure a false system, and to make time."

entered into a detailed examination of all tions submitted to the Commission, and ined their beauties and defects. He par- relt on Bozza's errors, after having bestowed e upon the fine portions of his picture. He with his Saint Jerome for the *ungraceful* of the outlines, and a certain *hardness of* more fitted for a Pagan warrior than a aint, *a conventional style* of colouring, *wi- of vitality, and a cold,* almost a contempt-

uous expression. "It is a fine figure," said he, "but it is not St. Jerome."

Titian also spoke of the Bianchini, and endeavoured to soften the bitterness of their utter failure by praising their work in a certain point of view. As it was his custom always to mix more honey than wormwood in his discourse, after praising the manual part of their work he endeavoured also to say something favourable of the design, but in the midst of a compliment he was interrupted by Tintoretto, who pronounced these words, still preserved in the record:

"I have pronounced no judgment as to these figures, nor as to their goodness, because I have not been ordered so to do."

After this memorable morning, Titian gave a great dinner to all the painters of the Commission, and to all the crowned Mosaists. The little Marietta appeared dressed as a sybil, and Titian sketched from her, that evening, his design for the head of the infant virgin, in the fine picture which is still to be seen in the Museum at Venice. Bozza did not make his appearance.

The repast was magnificent. They drank joyously the health of the laureates. Titian observed with utter astonishment the countenance and manners of Francesco. He could not understand fraternal affection so tender, so devoted; such a total absence of jealousy in an artist; he was quite aware that Francesco was not without ambition; but Francesco's heart was yet greater than his genius. Valerio was in ecstacy at his brother's joy. At times he was so overcome by it, that *he became sad.* At dessert, Marietta Robusti proposed *Titian's health,* and soon after, Francesco, rising, with

s hand, said, with a radiant brow,—"I
naster, Valerio Zuccato." The two bro-
emselves into each other's arms, and min-
ars. The good priest Alberto, it is said,
le more than reasonably excited, after
few drops of the Greek wines which the
were drinking by cupsful. He was so
naive, that all his intoxication was ex-
increase of friendship and admiration.
ame, towards the end of the dinner, but
good humour. "Many thanks, master,"
Titian, who offered him a cup of wine,
u wish me to drink on such a day as

he finest day of your life, my old friend?"
, "and is not that reason enough for
gon of Samos with your friends?"
;" replied the old man, "this day is not
It binds my sons to an ignoble trade for
lemns two geniuses, of the first order, to
urs. Many thanks, I see no great reason
n that."
vever a little softened when his sons pro-
th; and then the little Marietta came
play with the silver curls of his beard,
what she termed, her husband's pardon.
pretty one," said Zuccato, "does that
l last?"
well that I am anxious to have the be-
st as soon as possible," replied Tintoretto

es not say whether this feast ever took
hether Valerio Zuccato married Ma-

rietta Robusti. However, we may believe remained intimate, and that the two fam thenceforward, but one. Francesco wishe abdicate his authority in virtue of the ri brother, whose perseverance compelled him t the station of first master; so that Valeri mained purely honorary.

The school of the Zuccati again became and joyous; nothing was altered except t led a regular life, and that Gian Antonio induced by good examples, and gained by viour, became a worthy artist in talent and Happy days arose from this new horizo Zuccati produced many other *chef d'œuvres* of which would be too long; and besides, r you have plenty of leisure to go and admire selves in our cathedrals. The St. Jerome in the hall of the Treasury, that of Gian A the sacristy of St. Mark, that of Zuccato w present to the Duke of Savoy; I am un what has become of it.

Here finished the Abbe's tale. Many were made about Bozza. Notwithstanding faults of this artist, his great sufferings in "Bozza," replied the Abbe, "could not idea of working under the orders of the Zuc fear of finding them still generous, after all was more terrible to him than that of any p He wandered from town to town, workin *Bologna, now* at Padua; living on little, a *still less.* Notwithstanding his great tale

is haughty manners and his gloomy air
istrust. He cared little for poverty, but
as the torment of his life. After some years
d to Venice, and the Zuccati obtained for
nastership, and employment. Times were
ie Government had become less strict in its
Bozza might work, but it appeared that
could never forgive his past conduct with
he Zuccati. The inflexible old man, forced
iim with cartoons, made him wait for them
at a letter of Bozza's still remains, where
ns of being reduced to destitution, by the
le delays of the master. The Zuccati had
this kind to fear; they could design their
:ts; and besides, they were loved and es-
all the masters. They carried the Mosaic
gree of perfection which has never been
Bozza has left fine works, but he could not
s defects, because his soul was incomplete."
and Ceccato appear to have survived the
id to have taken their place in the first rank
hip.

ow," my friends, added the Abbe, "if you ex-
nagnificent Mosaic panels of the great age of
ainting, and if you remember what I showed
ther day, at Torcello, on the fragments of the
zantine gypso-plastic, you will see that the
this completely oriental art was united with
inting, until the epoch of the Zuccati; but
when left to itself, Mosaic art degenerated,
by being entirely lost. Florence seems to
polized this *art; but she* has reduced it to
ation. The new chapel of the Medici is

remarkable for the richness of the materials in its adornment; lapis lazuli, veined with most precious marbles, ambergris, coral, alabaster, malachite, are displayed in arabesques and designed in very pure taste; but our old unalterable colouring, our brilliant enamels, ously obtained in every desirable shade, by manufacture at Murano, our illustrious master our rich corporations, and our joyous com these exist now only to prove, by their n their ruins, or their memories, the splendo long passed away."

Day appeared in the horizon; grey sea-gu in flocks from the marshes of Palestrina, an in every direction the atmosphere, which was sensibly lighter every moment. The sun rapidity which was unknown to me; and th the morning threw me into a kind of ecstacy

"Behold the only blessing of which the cannot deprive us," said the Abbe, with a smile, "if a proclamation could prevent th shining radiantly above our cupolas, three pol would have been sent long ago to order hi his smiles and looks of love for the walls of

END OF THE MOSAIC WORKERS.

THE ORCO

A TRADITION

OF THE AUSTRIAN RULE IN VENICE.

THE ORCO;

A VENETIAN TRADITION.

g to our usual custom, we were sitting under
a; the evening was stormy, the sky covered
clouds, which emitted frequent gleams of
We were all sitting in such melancholy
it one would have thought the heaviness of
here had taken possession of our hearts,
ty we felt almost tearfully inclined. Beppa,
r the gayest of the gay, seemed quite given
houghts. In vain did the Abbe, who ap-
self to be much oppressed by the sadness of
y, endeavour by all means in his power, to
the spirits of our friend. Neither his ques-
sms, nor entreaties, could rouse her from
; her eyes were fixed on the sky, and her
yed at hazard over the chords of her guitar;
to be totally unconscious of anything pass-
her, and given up to listening to the plaintive
r instrument, and watching the capricious
of the clouds. The good Abbe Panorio,
by the ill success of his efforts, turned to

"Come, dear Zorzi, now try your power over the capricious beauty. There exists between you two, a kind of magnetic sympathy, which is stronger than all my reasoning, and the sound of your voice will often wake her from the most mournful dreams."

"The magnetic sympathy which you notice, my dear Abbe, proceeds from the entire identity of our sentiments. We have, through life, suffered and thought alike, and our mutual knowledge of each other's ideas informs us, what exterior circumstances have awakened their power. I will wager that I can divine, if not the exact subject, at least the nature of her reverie."

And turning to Beppa: "Carissima," said I, "to which of our sisters are your sad thoughts dedicated?"

"To the most beautiful," said she, without turning round, "to the noblest, to the most unhappy."

"When died she?" said I, already really interested for one who occupied so large a space in the memory of my noble-minded friend, and wishing to associate my regrets also with a destiny, of which I imagined I could not be entirely ignorant.

"She died the end of last winter, the same evening on which the masqued ball was given at the Servilio Palace. She had borne many sorrows, she had overcome many dangers, she had passed through terrible emotions without blenching, and she disappeared from our sight, leaving not a trace behind, as though she had been stricken by a thunderbolt. Every one in Venice knew her more or less, but I better than any, for none loved her so much; and in order to understand her, the inspiration of perfect love was necessary. Many *do not believe* in her death, though she has never *reappeared since* the evening I alluded to. They say she

i disappeared before, and may yet return; but
that she will return no more, and that her
i ended. Could I still doubt, I would, but
rived to inform me of the fatal truth by him
the unhappy cause of it. And what a death!
itest sorrow of this age of sorrows! And her
iat a life! So full of beauty and contrast, so
us, so brilliant, so sad, so splendid, so enthu-
io austere, so voluptuous, so complete in all
' resemblance with all human things! No!
ind no death have ever resembled hers. She
this prosaic age, has been enabled to suppress
:ommon realities of life, and to leave nothing
poetry. Faithful to the old customs of the
aristocracy, she never appeared until dusk;
, but without attendants. There is not an in-
of the city who has not met her, wandering
the squares or streets, or who has not perceived
lola stationary in some canal; but no one ever
her leave or enter it; and although no one was
:harge of it, no one ever attempted to rob it.
iinted and equipped just like all other gondolas,
every one recognized it, even the children all
he gondola of the Masque.' As to its destina-
where its mistress came from in the evening,
ied at morning, no one could even form a con-

Custom-house officers often saw a black shadow
through the Lagunes, and, mistaking it for a
r's bark, pursued it into the open sea; but
aylight broke, nothing offered itself to their
hich resembled the object of their pursuit, and
hey became so accustomed to its appearance,

that they contented themselves with saying: "T
the gondola of the masque again." Every nig
mysterious masque traversed the town, seeking
knew what. Now it was seen in the large open s
then in the obscurest streets, now on the bridge
under the piazzas of the noblest palaces, in th
frequented and in the most desert places. Som
its pace was slow, sometimes fast; it went—it c
apparently heedless alike of crowds or solitud
never stopped. It appeared to contemplate w
impassioned admiration, the houses, the monu
the canals, and the blue sky, and even to inh
very atmosphere with delight. When the Masq
cognized a friend, it signed to him to follow, an
disappeared. Many a time has it led me apa
the crowd, and seeking some sequestered pla
have conversed on subjects interesting to us b
always followed with confidence, because of our
ship; but many to whom it gave the sign of invi
did not dare to accept it. Strange reports were
and cooled the courage of the most intrepid.
whispered that many young men, believing th
had discovered a lovely face and figure und
masque and black robe, had become enamoured
as much from the singularity and mystery of h
ceedings, as from her imagined beauty, and tha
ing been so imprudent as to follow her, from th
ment they had disappeared. The police, hav
marked that these young people were all Au
directed all their energies to learn their fate,
seize the alleged cause of their disappearance.

But they had no better fortune than the c
house officers; the young foreigners never re-ap

nor could they ever lay their hands upon the Masque. A strange adventure too, which happened at this time, still further discouraged the most daring officers of the Viennese inquisition. Seeing that it was impossible to apprehend the Masque at night, two of the most zealous officers resolved to wait till she rejoined her gondola, and to seize her then. One evening, when they saw it fastened at the Quay of the Esclavons, they went down and concealed themselves in it. They remained all night without seeing any one, but an hour before daybreak they thought they felt the bark detached. They rose silently, and prepared, as they thought, to spring upon their prey, but on the instant a terrible blow or shock made both the gondola and the unlucky Austrian police officers lose their equilibrium. One was drowned, and the other only saved by the immediate assistance rendered by some smugglers. The next morning nothing was to be seen of the gondola, and the police would have imagined it had sunk for ever, but that the very next evening it was fastened at the same place, in precisely the same state. At last a superstitious terror seized all the myrmidons of the law, and none were willing again to tempt the adventure. The Masque was no further interfered with, and went and came as heretofore.

At the beginning of last autumn, a young Austrian officer, named Franz Lichtenstein, joined the garrison here. He was a young man, of an impassioned and enthusiastic character, and the germ of all noble and grand sentiments existed in his soul as if by instinct. Notwithstanding his bad political education as an aristocrat, he had kept his *mind free* from prejudice, and had a *heartfelt enthusiasm* for liberty. His position

prevented him from expressing this openly, but as soon as his public duties were finished, he discarded his uniform, which in his mind was indissolubly connected with the crimes of the government he served, and hastened to seek those friends in the city who had been attracted by his talents and virtue, with whom to interchange his thoughts and sympathies. We were always delighted to hear him speak of Venice. He gazed on her with the eye of an artist, mourned over her degradation, and worshipped her almost with a Venetian's love. He was never tired of wandering through the city, and expatiating on her beauties. His pride seemed to be in knowing her better than those who claimed her as their native land.

In his nocturnal wanderings he had encountered the Masque, and at first he had not paid much attention to it, until he noticed that it seemed actuated by the same curiosity and feelings as himself, and this strange coincidence was remarked upon by him to several persons. He was reminded of the mysterious dangers surrounding the veiled stranger, and advised to be on his guard. But brave, even to temerity, these warnings, instead of startling him, only inspired him with an ardent wish to become acquainted with the inscrutable personage who had produced so strong an impression upon the general mind. Wishing to preserve his incognito as carefully as the Masque preserved hers, he dressed himself as one of middle rank, and thus pursued his nocturnal excursions. He was not long in meeting the object of his search; one fine moonlight night he saw the Masque standing before the beautiful *church of* St. John and St. Paul. She seemed to be *contemplating* with extreme admiration the beautiful

ornaments of the Portal. The Count approached with slow and silent steps; she did not seem to hear him, and did not move from her position. Having waited a moment or two in order to see if he were discovered, he now approached nearer. He heard a deep sigh, and then she sang, but in so low a tone that he could not distinguish the words; but after a moment's attention he recognized the patois of a popular air, which he had often heard sung in the streets. Being himself a good musician, and endowed with an excellent memory, he even joined in the melody; but instead of stopping, as he had feared, the Masque continued her song, and their voices rose into the air in beautiful harmony together. When the song was ended, Franz, who did not understand the Venetian dialect, but was thoroughly conversant with Italian, spoke to her in pure Tuscan.

"Honour to those," said he, "honour and happiness to those who love Venice."

"Who art thou?" said the Masque, in a full sonorous voice, which, however, fell upon the ear like that of a nightingale.

"An idolater of Beauty."

"Art thou of those, whose brutal love would enslave free Beauty, or one, who, kneeling before her, captive and in sorrow, would join thy tears to hers?"

"When the bird of night sees his bosom's rose giving forth her beauty to the evening breeze, he sings in the fulness of his joy; when he sees her fading under the withering breath of the storm-cloud, he hides his head and mourns. So does my soul for Venice."

"Follow me, then; thou art one of my elect." And seizing the *young man's* hand, she drew him towards

the church, When he felt the cold hand of th known touch his, and saw that she directed her towards the gloomy church, the sinister historie had heard involuntarily recurred to his mind, seized with a momentary terror, he stopped short. masqued figure turned round, and fixing a scrutir glance upon him, said,

"Thou art afraid! Adieu."

Then dropping his hand, she was moving h away, when Franz, repenting of his hesitation, s forward, and catching hold of her hand again claimed:

"No! I am not afraid. Let us go on."

She continued her route without replying; instead of going towards the church, as at the fir seemed inclined, she dived into one of the little s which led from the square. The moon was now clo and the greatest obscurity reigned in the city. could scarcely see where he placed his feet, and distinguish nothing in the dark shadows which rounded him. From time to time, a few glea light served to show him the banks of a canal, a b a vault, or some unknown portion of a labyri obscure and winding streets, and then all was again. He soon discovered that he was a total str to this part of Venice, and quite at the mercy guide. But, resolved to brave everything, he te no disquietude, and followed his conductress wi making a single observation. After a long hour's the masqued figure stopped.

"It is well," said she, "you have a brave *had you shown* the least sign of fear, this m *would have been* our last; but you have been i

turbable, and I am satisfied. To-morrow, again, we will meet opposite the church of St. John and St. Paul at eleven o'clock.—Do not endeavour to follow me, it would be useless. Go down this little street to the right, and you will find yourself in St. Mark's Place. Au revoir."

She pressed his hand warmly, and disappeared before he had time to reply. The Count remained motionless for some minutes, astonished at all that had happened, and undecided what course to pursue. But after reflecting on the small chance he had of tracing this mysterious person, and the risk he should run of losing himself in the pursuit, he determined to return home; and following her directions, in a few minutes he found himself in St. Mark's Square, and soon regained his hotel.

The next day he was punctual to the rendezvous. He reached the square just as the clock struck eleven; and saw the Masque waiting for him on the steps of the church-door.

"It is well," said she, "thou art exact—let us enter."

She turned abruptly towards the church. Franz, who saw the door was closed, and knew that it was never open at night, thought she must be mad. But what was his surprise in seeing the door yield to the first effort. He followed his guide mechanically, who, as soon as he had entered, shut the door upon them. They were in darkness; but Franz recollecting that the inner door, which separated them from the nave, had no lock, felt no uneasiness, and was preparing to push it open. But she stopped him, saying abruptly—

"Have you ever been in this church before?"

"Twenty times," replied he, "and know it as well as *the architect himself.*"

"Say rather you think you know it, for in truth you are quite ignorant of it. Now enter."

Franz pushed open the door, and entered the body of the church. It was brilliantly illuminated, though completely deserted.

"What ceremony is to be celebrated to-night?" said Franz, stupified with astonishment.

"None, the church expected me. Follow me."

The Count endeavoured in vain to understand the sense of the words which the Masque addressed to him, but yielding to the mystery of the moment, he followed obediently. She led him towards the middle of the church, and made him remark, comprehend, and admire the general disposition of its parts. Then passing to details, she explained the construction of the nave, the columns, the chapels, the altars, the statues, the pictures, the ornaments, showed him the design of each part, explained the idea concealed in each device, and proceeded from each detail to the beautiful whole, she made him as it were enter into the very mind and spirit of the architect. Franz listened with a religious attention to every word that fell from the eloquent lips, which seemed to take a pleasure in enlightening him, and every moment felt more and more how little he had previously understood even that which to him had appeared easy of comprehension. By the time she had finished, the pale light of morning was dimning the lustre of the wax-tapers. Although she had spoken for hours, and had not rested all the time, neither her voice nor gestures showed a symptom of fatigue. But her head was sunk upon her bosom, which heaved violently, and the sighs which it *breathed forth* might be distinctly heard. Suddenly

she raised her head, and uplifting her arms to heaven, exclaimed:

"Oh! Servitude, Servitude!"

Tears dropping from beneath her masque, fell upon her black robe.

"Why do you weep?" exclaimed Franz, approaching her.

"To-morrow," she replied, "at midnight, before the Arsenal."

And she went out by the side-door on the left, which closed heavily after her. At the same moment the *Angelus* sounded, and Franz, startled by the unexpected sound of the clock, turned round and saw that all the tapers were extinct. He remained for some time almost immoveable with surprise; he then left the church by the principal door which the sacristans had just opened, and went slowly home, endeavouring to divine who this woman might be, who was so bold, so artistical, so powerful, and yet so full of fascination in her manner, and dignity in her deportment.

The next evening at midnight the Count was at the arsenal. There he found the Masque waiting for him, and without speaking, she led the way with great rapidity towards one of the side doors on the right, which she opened by the aid of a golden key, which Franz saw by the moon's light; the lock yielded without noise, and passing in first, she signed to Franz to follow. He hesitated an instant. To penetrate into the arsenal at night by means of a false key, was to run the risk of being summoned before a council of war, if discovered; and not to be discovered, seemed impossible in *a place filled with* sentinels. However, *seeing her preparing to close* the door upon him, he

decided to pursue the adventure, and entered. Masque led him through several courts, then th corridors and galleries, of which she opened doors with her golden key, and at last introduce into vast saloons filled with arms of all kinds all nations which had served in the wars c Republic. These saloons were lighted by lar placed at regular distances between the trophies. displayed to the Count the most curious and cele weapons of all kinds, telling him to whom the belonged, the combats in which they had been emp and relating to him in detail the exploits of whic had been the instruments. Thus did she resu before the eyes of Franz the whole history of V After visiting the four saloons dedicated to these she led him into another still more spacious, and l in the same manner, where they found variously s pieces of wood, the remains of different vessels many portions of the last Bucentaur. She exp to her companion the qualities of all the di species of wood, the different construction vessels, the purposes for which they had been de and the actions in which they had borne thei and then pointing to the fragments of the Bucen

"Behold," said she in a low sad voice, "beh remains of our past sovereignty. There lies the of the last vessel which bore the Doge to his A Bride. Now Venice is a Slave, and the Slave bride. Oh! Servitude! Servitude!"

After having pronounced these words, she arsenal, but this time she led the Count forth al *could not* without danger have remained there *returned* the same way by which they had

eting any one. They then fixed on a new eeting for the morrow, and separated.

day, and each following day she led Franz incipal buildings of the town, introducing here with marvellous facility, explaining which came under their notice with an clearness, and proving herself possessed of nowledge and sensibility. He knew not to admire, the intellect which appeared to owledge, or the heart whose every emotion ght with tenderness. That, which at first at a fantasy, became a deep and real feeling. d to his seeking the Masque, and surprise t made him continue the adventure. The of each succeeding night became an utter him. Although her words were often grave ad, yet Franz found an indescribable fasci- ch him to the unknown. He could not close n sleep, if he had missed, the evening's and tearful communion with her. He had found a respect for her enthusiasm and ap- ering, that he had never even requested her her masque, or declare her name; for as she inquired his, he would have blushed to betray sity than she did; and besides he had a hoping to enjoy her confidence as her own than as a consequence of his importunity. l to understand the delicacy of his conduct, reciate it, for at each interview she showed confidence and sympathy. Though love had been mentioned between them, Franz had pe that she divined his passion, and secretly in return. *This hope* alone was almost suf-

ficient for his present happiness, and when a wish sometimes arose, to know more intimately one, who was already the mistress of his soul, his imagination, acted upon by the beautiful mystery which surrounded her, painted her as a creature of such beauty and perfection, that he almost dreaded the time when she would appear to him in her simple womanhood.

One night when they were lingering under the colonnades of St. Mark, the Masque made Franz stop before a picture which represented a girl kneeling before the patron saint of the city.

"What think you of the beauty of that figure?" said she, after allowing him time to examine it.

"That it is," replied Franz, "the most marvellous beauty which it is possible even to conceive. The inspired soul of the artist has produced this divine imagination, but such a face can exist but in heaven alone."

She pressed his hand warmly, and replied, "And on my part, I can imagine nothing more glorious than St. Mark, as he appears in that picture, and only to one who is the earthly image of the saint can my love be given."

Franz trembled and turned pale, as he heard these words, for he recognized the most striking likeness between himself and the saint's picture. He fell on his knees before the unknown, and bathed her hands with his tears, without being able to speak.

"I know now that thou art mine own," said she, in a voice broken by emotion, "and that thou art worthy of knowing and of possessing me,—To-morrow at the ball at the Servilio Palace."

She then quitted him as heretofore, but without pro-

nouncing the so to speak sacramental words with which she had terminated their former interviews. Franz quite wild with joy, wandered all day about the town, utterly unable to stop a moment in any one place. He admired the blue heavens, smiled joyfully at the Lagunes, looked at the houses as with a friendly greeting, and talked to the winds. Every one who met him took him for a fool or a madman, and looked their astonishment. He perceived it, and laughed at their folly, as they laughed at his. When any of his friends asked him what he had done with himself the last month, he could only repeat, "I am going to be happy," and passed on. When the evening came, he purchased a magnificent scarf and new epaulettes, and went in full uniform to the Servilio Palace.

It was a splendid ball. Every one except the officers of the Austrian garrison was disguised, and the variety of different and elegant costumes, combined with the sounds of the full orchestra to form a brilliant and animated scene. Franz strolled through all the apartments, approached every group, and examined every lady. Many were remarkably handsome, but none seemed worthy to stay his wandering looks an instant.

"She is not here yet," said he to himself, "I was sure of t, it is not yet her hour."

He placed himself behind a column near the principal entrance, and waited with his eyes fixed on the portal. Often did the door open and often did lovely women enter, without one quicker movement of his heart. But just as the clock struck eleven, he started and exclaimed, loud enough for those near him to hear:

"Behold her!"

All eyes turned towards him, as though to ask the

meaning of his exclamation. But the lady who entered soon attracted all eyes and all attention upon herself. Franz recognized her immediately. She was the living image of the maiden in the picture, habited in the costume of the fifteenth century, and her beauty seemed yet more striking from the magnificence of her costume. She advanced with a slow and majestic step, with perfect self-possession, and without saluting any one; as though she were the queen of the ball. No one seemed to recognize her save Franz, and every one gave way before her, overcome by her dignity, and almost more than mortal beauty. Franz, dazzled and enchanted, followed at a short distance. Just as she arrived in the principal room, a young man in the costume of Tasso, was singing to the accompaniment of a lute, a romance in honour of Venice. She approached him, and looking fixedly at him, asked how he had temerity sufficient, in such a costume, to sing the glories of Venice. Startled by the question, the young man changed colour, and presented his instrument to her. She took it, and running her fingers over the chords, she chanted to its modulations a kind of song, in an irregular and often interrupted rhythm.

"Dance, laugh, and sing, gay children of Venice! For you, winter has no frost, night no darkness, life no cares. You are the fortunate of the earth, and Venice is the Queen of Nations! Who speaks? Who dares to think that Venice is no longer Venice? There are eyes to see, ears to hear, and tongues to tell, and the Council of Ten to dread, if you are not good citizens. Good citizens dance, laugh, and sing, but never speak their thoughts. Then dance, laugh, and sing, children *of Venice!*

"Venice, thou who seemest born rather of the spirit, than executed by the hand of man; and created for the passing sojourn of pure souls, as a foretaste on this earth of heaven; walls which yet seem inhabited by spirits, and round which the atmosphere of magic still lingers; colonnades, which in airy lightness seem trembling in the evening air, piercing spires which intermingle in beautiful confusion with the floating masts of ships; angels and saints, who appear just to have alighted on the cupolas to feel the cool sea-breeze; thou city, who seemest not like others to be on the dull and heavy earth, but to float like a swan upon the waters, rejoice, rejoice, rejoice! A new destiny offers itself before you, as glorious as the former. The Black Eagle spreads its wings above the Lion of St. Mark, and Austrian feet dance in the Palace of the Doges! Be silent, ye harmonies of night! Peace, insensate whispers of the Dance! Be no longer heard, hymn of the fisherman; cease to murmur, voice of the Adriatic! Expire, lamp of the Madonna; for ever veil thy splendour, thou silver queen of night! There are no longer Venetians in Venice! Are we dreaming? Is this a festival? Yes, yes, dance, laugh, and sing! It is the hour, when the shade of Faliero slowly descends the Giant's Staircase, and pauses on the last step. Dance, laugh, and sing, for midnight approaches, and the spirits of the departed will sound in our ears: Servitude! Servitude!"

As the last words died upon her lips, she let her lute fall, which sent forth a mournful sound as it fell upon the marble floor; and the clock struck: every one listened to the twelve strokes in a deep silence. Then the master of the house advancing towards the unknown, *said in a startled and* irritated manner:

"Madam, to whom am I indebted for the honour of your presence?"

"To me," exclaimed Franz, "and if it be displeasing, I am here to avouch it!"

The unknown, who had apparently paid no attention to the host's question, turned round on hearing the Count's voice, with a countenance beaming with joy:

"I live," said she, "I shall live;" but perceiving his uniform, she turned pale, her looks became gloomy, and she abruptly said:

"Why have you chosen such a disguise?"

"This is no disguise," answered he, "it is my—" he could say no more, the expression of her countenance terrified him. She looked at him for a short time in silence, and tears fell from her eyes. Franz hastily approached her, but exclaiming in a broken voice, "follow me," she went rapidly through the crowd, and leaving the palace, stepped into her gondola, desiring Franz to follow and seat himself. When he had done so, he cast his eyes round, and perceiving no gondolier, said, "But who will conduct the gondola?"

"I," replied she, seizing the oar.

"Nay, rather let me," said the Count.

"No! Austrian hands can never manage the Venetian oar," and so saying, the gondola glided like an arrow through the Lagune.

They were soon far from the palace. Franz, who was eagerly awaiting the explanation of her sudden anger, was astonished and inquiet at her continued silence.

"Where are we going?" said he, after some moments' reflection.

"*Where our destiny* leads us," replied she; and, as

though these words had revived her displeasure, she plied her oar with redoubled vigour. The gondola, obedient to her skilful hand, seemed literally to fly over the water. Franz saw the foam glide past with its dazzling spray, and all the boats they met or passed on their passage, were soon left behind, as clouds scattered by the hurricane. The darkness increased, the wind rose, and the young man could hear nothing but the rippling of the wave, and the breeze which lifted his hair; and he could see nothing but the shades of evening, and the white figure of his companion upright on the prow:—her hands on the oar, her hair scattered over her shoulders, and her white robes agitated by the winds, she seemed less like a woman, than the storm-spirit, rejoicing in the troubled waters.

"Where are we?" exclaimed Franz, in an agitated voice.

"Is the Captain afraid?" said she, with a disdainful laugh.

Franz did not reply; he felt that she was right, and that fear was overcoming him. Not being able to conquer it, he resolved at least to conceal it, and to keep silent. But after some time, feeling more and more bewildered, he rose and approached his mysterious companion.

"Be seated," cried she.

Franz, whom his fears rendered desperate, still advanced.

"Be seated!" reiterated she; and perceiving that he came yet nearer, she stamped on the prow so violently with her foot, that the gondola trembled as though it would be completely overset, and Franz losing his balance, fell senseless on the deck. When he recovered,

he saw the unknown weeping at his feet. Touched by her bitter grief, and forgetting what had passed, he raised her in his arms, and seated her by his side; but though she did not resist, her tears continued to flow.

"Why do you weep, dearest?" exclaimed Franz, pressing her to his bosom.

"The Lion, the Lion," said she, pointing to the sky.

Franz looked, and saw the constellation of the Lion shining in solitary splendour in the heavens.

"But why this deep sorrow, beloved?" said he. "The stars can have no real influence over our destiny; and if they have, we can easily find a favourable constellation to watch over our fate. Venus rules the sky as well as the Lion."

"Venus hath set, and the Lion is risen; and look, look," said she, mournfully, and pointing towards the horizon, "Who can resist that which approaches?"

Franz looked where she pointed, and saw a black shadow, which seemed in the distance surrounded by a halo of fire.

"What is that object?" said he in amazement.

"Destiny," replied she; "who advances to seize its victim." 'What victim?' sayest thou. "That one which I shall offer. Have you not heard of the young Austrians who have entered my gondola, and never reappeared?"

"Yes, but that rumour was surely false.'

"It is true; I must destroy, or be destroyed. Each youth of your country who loves me, and is unloved by me, dies.—And whilst I do not love, I live, and I destroy; and when I love, I die.—It is my destiny."

"Oh! God, who art thou, then?"

"*How it advances!* in a moment it will be upon us. *Listen, listen.*"

The dark shadow bore down with inconceivable rapidity, and now appeared as a large vessel. It seemed illuminated with a red flame on all sides, black shadowy figures stood immoveable on the prow, and a vast quantity of oars rose and fell with a measured cadence, falling on the ear with a boding sound; hollow voices chaunted the *Dies Iræ*, accompanied by the clanking of chains.

"Oh, life—life!" exclaimed the unknown in despairing accents, "Franz, dost thou not recognize that vessel?"

"Its phantom-like appearance makes my blood run cold, but I do not recognize it."

"It is the Bucentaur. The same which has engulphed all your com-patriots. They were all here, sitting in this same seat, at the same hour, near me, in this same gondola. As the vessel approached, a voice demanded, 'Who goes there,' I replied, Austria; then the voice said, 'Dost thou love or hate,' I have replied, I hate; and the voice has said 'Live;' then the Bucentaur has run down the gondola, engulphed your countrymen, and carried me in triumph over the waters."

"And to-day?"—

"Hark, they speak."

A deep mournful voice stilling the funeral noise on board the Bucentaur spoke, and said,

"Who goes there?"

"Austria," replied the trembling accents of the unknown.

A chorus of maledictions broke from the Bucentaur, which was approaching with increasing rapidity; there *was then silence again*, and the same voice spoke, and *said:*

"Dost thou love or hate?"

"The unknown hesitated a moment, and then, with a voice of thrilling power, she said, "I love."

"Then thy destiny is accomplished.—Thou lovest Austria.—Perish Venice!"

A bitter cry, a sound as of terror and despair, rang through the air, and Franz sank beneath the waves. When he rose to the surface, he could see nothing, neither the gondola, the Bucentaur, nor his beloved. He at last perceived some feeble lights in the distance, which proved to be the lanterns of the fishermen of Murano; and by vigorous swimming he contrived to reach their island. Alas for Venice!

Beppa finished, the tears again streaming from her eyes. We watched her in silence, not attempting to console her. But suddenly she dried her tears, and turning round with capricious vivacity, said, "Well, what makes you all so sad? Is it the effect fairy tales commonly produce on you? Have you never heard of the *Orco*, the Venetian *Trilby?* Have you never met it of an evening, in the cathedrals or canals? It is a good spirit enough, only doing evil to traitors or oppressors; one might call it the guardian demon of Venice. But the Viceroy, hearing of the perilous adventure of Count Lichtenstein, sent to request the Patriarch to perform a grand exorcism on the Lagunes; and since that time the *Orco* has never re-appeared."

H. G. Clarke & Co., Printers, 66, Old Bailey.

U N D I N E;

A MINIATURE ROMANCE.

BY

FREDERIC,
BARON DE LA MOTTE FOUQUE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

BY

THE REV. THOMAS TRACY.

LONDON:
H. G. *CLARKE AND* CO., 66, OLD BAILEY

1844.

PREFACE.

The following translation of UNDINE, one of the minor romances of Frederic, Baron de la Motte Fouque, is from the fourth impression of the original, that of Berlin, 1826. It was made in the winter of 1835, and has since received such revision and improvement, as the kindness of literary friends, in connection with my own wish to do as little injustice to the genius of the author as I could, has enabled me to give it.

This is no place for discussing the characteristics of Fouque, but he has one excellence of composition so rich and rare, that I may be permitted to allude to it here: —I mean his harmonious union of fiction and fact, his exquisite blending of the natural and supernatural. So perfect do we find this union to be, such a melting indeed of both into one, that we hardly know in which of the two we feel ourselves most at home. We have the true feeling of real life, embellished by the magic of imagination,—just as the frost-work, which at times we see almost spiritualizing our groves and shrubberies in winter, constitutes so much of their peculiar charm;

—and this double excellence it was, that led me to select and translate a few specimens of this writer's Natural and Supernatural.

UNDINE is a beautifully imaginative tale, a masterpiece in this department of German Literature. With a simplicity of the antique cast it combines the most picturesque wildness, unbroken interest, excellent principles, a peculiar vein of pleasantry, and even what we seldom look for in works of this kind, touches of genuine pathos. We are esteemed, and I presume justly, a less imaginative race than the people of Germany. Our traditions, local superstitions, early influences, education, habits of thought, and other circumstances of life, are of a more common-place order than theirs. We are not, it may be, less fond of legendary lore, since love of the marvellous seems to be a universal impulse in our nature; but we seek its enjoyment with the mere calm approval of fancy, while they welcome it with much of the warmth of good faith. Still, if 'THE WORLD OF REALITY, NOT THE FAIRYLAND OF ROMANCE,' *be* our maxim, the spirit of truth and tenderness is no where wholly extinct: long as it may lie slumbering in the soul, it is too inseparable a part of our being ever to die. Is not imagination a germ of immortality?

I am gratified to perceive that many writers allude *to this fiction in* terms of warm commendation. Menzel,

in his development of German Literature, of which we have lately been favoured with an able translation, speaks of this and the 'Vial-Genie,' or 'Mandrake,' another miniature romance by the same author, in these words: "Fouque's 'Undine' will always continue one of the most delightful creations of German poetry. Also the little story of the 'Mandrake' belongs to the best elaborations of the old national sagas," or tales of the supernatural, derived from the voice of traditional superstition. But the most accurate appreciation that I have seen of Undine, I find among those golden fragments of the richest of minds, the Specimens of the Table Talk of S. T. Coleridge. This is the passage to which I refer: "Undine is a most exquisite work. It shows the general want of any sense for the fine and the subtle in the public taste, that this romance made no deep impression. Undine's character, before she receives a soul, is marvellously beautiful."

The author, to whom we are so much indebted for these Specimens, and other Literary Remains, and to whom we hope to be more and more indebted, as well for these labours of love as for those of his own classical genius, observes, in a note: "Mr. Coleridge's admiration of this little romance was unbounded. He said there was something in Undine even beyond Scott, —that Scott's best characters and conceptions were *composed; by* which I understood him to mean, that

Baillie Nicol Jarvie, for example, was made up of old particulars, and received its individuality from the author's power of fusion, being in the result an admirable product, as Corinthian brass was said to be the conflux of the spoils of a city. But Undine, he said, was one and single in projection, and had presented to his imagination, what Scott had never done, an absolutely new idea."

This character being formed according to the principles of the Rosicrucian philosophy, it has been suggested to me, that, to enable the reader to understand and appreciate her story, I ought to prefix a sketch of that system to my translation, and I once thought of profiting by the suggestion. On reflection, however, I cannot but view the work as complete in itself. Whatever seems requisite, even for readers least conversant with such lore, Fouque has contrived to incorporate, and I think very happily too, with the texture of his fable. See the developments of the eighth chapter. Everybody enjoys the delightful marvels of the ARABIAN NIGHTS, marvels that have almost become numbered among the commonplaces of our experience; even children understand the machinery of genii, magicians, talismans, rings, lamps, and enchanted horses.

To this fourth edition, and it may be to an earlier,

the author attached the following airy and graceful "DEDICATION:"

Vision of beauty dear Undine,
Since led by storied light,
I found you, mystic sprite,
How soothing to my heart your voice has been!

You press beside me, angel mild,
Soft breathing all your woes,
And winning brief repose,—
A wayward, tender, timid child.

Still my guitar has caught the tone,
And from its gate of gold
Your whispered sorrows rolled,
Till thro' the world their sound is flown.

And many hearts your sweetness love,
Though strange your freaks and state,
And, while I sing your fate,
The wild and wond'rous tale approve.

Now would they warmly, one and all,
Your fortunes trace anew:
Then, sweet, your way pursue,
And, fearless, enter bower and hall.

Greet noble knights with homage due;
But greet, all trusting there,
The lovely German fair;
"Welcome," they cry, "the maiden true!"

And if toward ME one dart a glance,
Say, "*He's* a loyal knight,
Who serves you, ladies bright,—
Guitar and sword,—at tourney, feast, and dance."

The reader will allow me to observe, in closing these *brief notices, that* supported as well by my own feeling

as by the judgment of Menzel, Coleridge, and, I may add, by the general voice of criticism, I view UNDINE not only as a work of art, but as something far superior, an exquisite creation of genius. If I have failed to do justice to her peculiar traits, in thus introducing her to him in the costume of our language, it is not owing to want of admiration, or of studiously endeavouring to be faithful to my trust; and, aware of the difficulty of presenting her the 'vision of beauty' that Fouque 'found' her, he will forgive the fond impulse of my ambition. What welcome she may receive among us, it remains for the noble knights and lovely ladies of our country to show. She does not come as a stranger,—she has already been once greeted with favour; still, wide as may be her fame in the world of letters, she seems, as yet, to be more talked of in the world of common readers, than, if I may so speak, known in person. To ALL lovers of the imaginative, therefore,—to every "simple, affectionate, and wonder-loving heart,"—her fortunes are again committed.

UNDINE.

CHAPTER I.

How a Knight came to a Fisherman's Cottage.

Once on a beautiful evening, it may now be many hundred years ago, there was a worthy old fisherman who sat before his door mending his nets.

Now the corner of the world where he dwelt, was exceedingly picturesque. The green turf on which he had built his cottage, ran far out into a green lake; and this slip of verdure appeared to stretch into it as much through love of its clear waters, blue and bright, as the lake, moved by a like impulse, strove to fold the meadow, with its waving grass and flowers, and the cooling shade of the trees, in its fond embrace. Such were the freshness and beauty of both, that they seemed to be drawn toward each other, and the one to be visiting the other as a guest.

With respect to human beings, indeed, in this pleasant spot, after excepting the fisherman and his family, there were few or rather none to be met with. For in the back-ground of the scene, toward the west and north-west, lay a forest of extraordinary wildness, which, owing *to its gloom* and its being almost impassable, as

well as to fear of the strange creatures and visionary orms to be encountered there, most people avoided entering, unless in cases of extreme necessity. The pious old fisherman, however, many times passed through it without harm, when he carried the fine fish, which he caught by his beautiful strip of land, to a great city lying only a short distance beyond the extensive forest.

Now the reason he was able to go through this wood with so much ease, may have been chiefly this, because he entertained scarcely any thoughts but such as were of a religious nature; and besides, every time he crossed the evil-reported shades, he used to sing some holy song with a clear voice and from a sincere heart.

Well, while he sat by his nets this evening, neither fearing nor devising evil, a sudden terror seized him, as he heard a rushing in the darkness of the wood, that resembled the trampling of a mounted steed, and the noise continued every instant drawing nearer and nearer to his little territory.

What he had fancied, when abroad in many a stormy night, respecting the mysteries of the forest, now flashed through his mind in a moment; especially the figure of a man of gigantic stature and snow-white appearance, who kept nodding his head in a portentous manner. Yes, when he raised his eyes toward the wood, the form came before him in perfect distinctness, as he saw the nodding man burst forth from the mazy web-work of leaves and branches. But he immediately felt emboldened, when he reflected that nothing to give him alarm had ever befallen him even in the forest; and moreover, that on this open neck of land the evil spirit, *it was likely, would* be still less daring in the exercise

of its power. At the same time, he prayed aloud with the most earnest sincerity of devotion, making use of a passage of the Bible. This inspired him with fresh courage; and soon perceiving the illusion, the strange mistake into which his imagination had betrayed him, he could with difficulty refrain from laughing. The white, nodding figure he had seen, became transformed, in the twinkling of an eye, to what in reality it was, a small brook, long and familiarly known to him, which ran foaming from the forest, and discharged itself into the lake.

But what had caused the startling sound, was a knight, arrayed in sumptuous apparel, who beneath the shadows of the trees came riding toward the cottage. His doublet was of violet blue, embroidered with gold, and his scarlet cloak hung gracefully over it; on his cap of burnished gold waved red and violet-colored plumes, and in his golden shoulder belt flashed a sword, richly ornamented and extremely beautiful. The white barb that bore the knight, was more slenderly built than battle-horses usually are; and he touched the turf with a step so light and elastic, that the green and flower-woven carpet seemed hardly to receive the slightest break from his tread. The old fisherman, notwithstanding, did not feel perfectly secure in his mind, although he was forced to believe, that no evil could be feared from an appearance so prepossessing; and therefore, as good manners dictated he took off his hat on the knight's coming near, and quietly remained by the side of his nets.

When the stranger stopped, and asked whether he with his horse could have shelter and entertainment *there for the night*, the fisherman returned answer:

"As to your horse, fair Sir, I have no better stable for him than this shady meadow, and no better provender than the grass that is growing here. But with respect to yourself, you shall be welcome to our humble cottage,—to the best supper and lodging we are able to give you."

The knight was well contented with this reception; and alighting from his horse, which his host assisted him to relieve from saddle and bridle, he let him hasten away to the fresh feeding-ground, and thus spoke: "Even had I found you less hospitable and kindly disposed, my worthy old friend, you would still, I suspect, hardly have got rid of me to-day; for here, I perceive, a broad lake lies before us, and as to riding back into that wood of wonders, with the shades of evening deepening around me, may Heaven in its grace preserve me from the thought!"

"Pray, not a word of the wood, or of returning into it!" said the fisherman, and took his guest into the cottage.

There, beside the hearth, from which a frugal fire was diffusing its light through the clean dusky room, sat the fisherman's aged wife in a great chair. At the entrance of their noble guest, she rose and gave him a courteous welcome, but sat down again in her seat of honour, not making the slightest offer of it to the stranger. Upon this the fisherman said with a smile:

"You must not be offended with her, young gentleman, because she has not given up to you the best chair in the house; it is a custom among poor people to look upon this as the privilege of the aged."

"*Why, husband!*" cried the old lady with a quiet *smile*, "*where* can your wits be wandering? Our guest,

to say the least of him, must belong to a Christian country, and how is it possible then, that so well-bred a young man, as he appears to be, could dream of driving old people from their chairs? Take a seat, my young master," continued she, turning to the knight; "there is still quite a snug little chair across the room there, only be careful not to shove it about too roughly, for one of its legs, I fear, is none of the firmest."

The knight brought up the seat as carefully as she could desire, and sat down upon it with gentlemanly good-humour; while it seemed to him for a moment, that he must be somehow related to this little household, and have just returned home from abroad.

These three worthy people now began to converse in the most friendly and familiar manner. In relation to the forest, indeed, concerning which the knight occasionally made some inquiries, the old man chose to know and say but little; at any rate he was of opinion, that slightly touching upon it, at this hour of twilight, was most suitable and safe; but of the cares and comforts of their home and their business abroad, the aged couple spoke more freely, and listened also with eager curiosity, as the knight recounted to them his travels, and how he had a castle near one of the sources of the Danube, and that his name was Sir Huldbrand of Ringstetten.

Already had the stranger, while they were in the midst of their talk, been aware at times of a splash against the little low window, as if some one were dashing water against it. The old man every time he heard the noise, knit his brows with vexation; but at at last *when the* whole sweep of a shower came pour-

ing like a torrent against the panes, and bubbling through the decayed frame into the room, he started up indignant, rushed to the window, and cried with a threatening voice:

"Undine! will you never leave off these fooleries? not even to-day, when we have a stranger-lord with us in the cottage?"

All without now became still, only a low titter was just perceptible, and the fisherman said, as he came back to his seat: "You will have the goodness, my honoured guest, to pardon this freak, and it may be a multitude more, but she has no feeling of evil or any thing improper. This mischievous Undine, to confess the truth, is our adopted daughter, and she stoutly refuses to give over this frolicsome childishness of hers, although she has already entered her eighteenth year. But in spite of this, as I said before, she is at heart one of the very best children in the world."

"*You* may say so," broke in the old lady, shaking her head,—"you can give a better account of her than I can. When you return home from fishing, or from selling your fish in the city, you may think her frolics very delightful. But to have her figuring about you the whole day long, and never, from morning to night to hear her speak one word of sense; and then, as she grows older, instead of having any help from her in the family, to find her a continual cause of anxiety, lest her wild humours should completely ruin us,—that is quite a different affair, and enough at last to weary out the patience even of a saint."

"Well, well," replied the master of the house, with a smile, "you have your trials with Undine, and I have *mine with the* lake. The lake often beats down my

dams, and breaks the meshes of my nets, but for all that I have a strong affection for it; and so have you, in spite of your mighty crosses and vexations, for our nice pretty little child. Is it not true?"

"One cannot be very angry with her," answered the old lady, as she gave her husband an approving smile.

That instant the door flew open, and a girl of slender form, almost a very miniature of woman, her hair flaxen and her complexion fair, in one word, a blonde-like miracle of beauty, slipped laughing in, and said: "You have only been making a mock of me, father; for where now is the guest you mentioned?"

The same moment, however, she perceived the knight also, and continued standing before the comely young man in fixed astonishment. Huldbrand was charmed with her graceful figure, and viewed her lovely features with the more intense regard, as he imagined it was only her surprise that allowed him the opportunity, and that she would soon turn away from his gaze with double bashfulness. But the event was the very reverse of what he expected. For after now regarding him quite a long while, she felt more confidence, moved nearer, knelt down before him, and, while she played with a gold medal, which he wore attached to a rich chain on his breast, exclaimed:

"Why, you beautiful, you friendly guest! how have you reached our poor cottage at last? Have you been obliged, for years and years, to wander about the world, before you could catch one glimpse of our nook? Do you come out of that wild forest, my lovely friend?"

The old woman was so prompt in her reproof, as to allow him no time to answer. She commanded the *maiden to rise, show* better manners, and go to her

work. But Undine, without making any reply, drew a little footstool near Huldbrand's chair, sat down upon it with her netting, and said in a gentle tone:

"I will work here."

The old man did as parents are apt to do with children, to whom they have been over-indulgent. He affected to observe nothing of Undine's strange behaviour, and was beginning to talk about something else. But this was what the little girl would not allow him to do. She broke in upon him: "I have asked our kind guest, from whence he has come among us, and he has not yet answered me."

"I come out of the forest, you lovely little vision," Huldbrand returned, and she spoke again:

"You must also tell me how you came to enter that forest, so feared and shunned, and the marvellous adventures you met with there; for there is no escaping, I guess, without something of this kind."

Huldbrand felt a slight shudder, on remembering what he had witnessed, and looked involuntarily toward the window; for it seemed to him, that one of the strange shapes, which had come upon him in the forest, must be there grinning in through the glass; but he discerned nothing except the deep darkness of night, which had now enveloped the whole prospect. Upon this, he became more collected, and was just on the point of beginning his account, when the old man thus interrupted him:

"Not so, Sir Knight; this is by no means a fit hour for such relations."

But Undine, in a state of high excitement, sprang up *from her little* cricket, braced her beautiful arms against *her sides, and* cried, placing herself directly before the

fisherman: "He shall *not* tell his story, father? he shall not? But it is my will; he shall! he shall, stop him who may!"

Thus speaking, she stamped her neat little foot vehemently on the floor, but all with an air of such comic and good-humoured simplicity, that Huldbrand now found it quite as hard to withdraw his gaze from her wild emotion, as he had before from her gentleness and beauty. The old man, on the contrary, burst out in unrestrained displeasure. He severely reproved Undine for her disobedience and her unbecoming carriage toward the stranger, and his good old wife joined him in harping on the same string.

By these rebukes Undine was only excited the more. "If you want to quarrel with me," she cried, "and will not let me hear what I so much desire, then sleep alone in your smoky old hut!"—And swift as an arrow she shot from the door, and vanished amid the darkness of the night.

CHAPTER II.

In what manner Undine had come to the Fisherman.

Huldbrand and the fisherman sprang from their seats, and were rushing to stop the angry girl; but before they could reach the cottage door, she had disappeared in the cloud-like obscurity without, and no sound, not so much even as that of her light footstep, betrayed the course she had taken. Huldbrand threw a glance of inquiry toward his host: it almost seemed to him, as if his whole interview with the sweet apparition, which had so suddenly plunged again amid the night, were no other than a continuation of the wonderful forms, that had just played their mad pranks with him in the forest; but the old man muttered between his teeth:

"This is not the first time she has treated us in this manner. Now must our hearts be filled with anxiety, and our eyes find no sleep, the livelong night; for who can assure us, in spite of her past escapes, that she will not some time or other come to harm, if she thus continue out in the dark and alone until daylight?"

"Then pray, for God's sake, father, let us follow her," cried Huldbrand, anxiously.

"Wherefore should we?" replied the old man; "it would be a sin were I to suffer you, all alone, to search after the foolish girl amid the lonesomeness of night; and my old limbs would fail to carry me to this wild rover, even if I knew to what place she has hurried off."

"Still we ought at least to call after her, and beg her to return," said Huldbrand; and he began to call in tones of earnest entreaty: "Undine! Undine! come back, pray come back!"

The old man shook his head, and said: "All your shouting, however loud and long, will be of no avail; you know not as yet, Sir knight, what a self-willed thing the little wilding is." But still, even hoping against hope, he could not himself cease calling out every minute, amid the gloom of night: "Undine! ah, dear Undine! I beseech you, pray come back,—only this once."

It turned out, however, exactly as the fisherman had said. No Undine could they hear or see; and as the old man would on no account consent that Huldbrand should go in quest of the fugitive, they were both obliged at last to return into the cottage. There they found the fire on the hearth almost gone out, and the mistress of the house, who took Undine's flight and danger far less to heart than her husband, had already gone to rest. The old man blew up the coals, put on kindling stuff and billets of wood, and by means of the renewed flame hunted for a jug of wine, which he brought and set between himself and his guest.

"You, Sir knight, as well as myself," said he, "are anxious on the silly girl's account, and it would be better, I think, to spend part of the night in chatting and drinking, than keep turning and turning on our rush-mats, and trying in vain to sleep. What is your opinion?"

Huldbrand was well pleased with the plan; the fisherman pressed him to take the vacant seat of honor, its worthy occupant having now left it for her couch;

and they relished their beverage and enjoyed their chat, as two such good men and true ever ought to do. To be sure, whenever the slightest thing moved before the windows, or at times when just nothing at all was moving, one of them would look up and exclaim, "There she comes!"—Then would they continue silent a few moments, and afterward, when nothing appeared, would shake their heads, breathe out a sigh, and go on with their talk.

But since they were both so pre-occupied in their minds, as to find it next to impossible to dwell upon any subject separate from Undine, the best plan they could devise was, that the old fisherman should relate, and the knight should hear, in what manner Undine had come to the cottage. So the fisherman, giving an account of the circumstances, began as follows:

"It is now about fifteen years, since I one day crossed the wild forest with fish for the city market. My wife had remained at home, as she was wont to do; and at this time for a reason of more than common interest; for although we were beginning to feel the advances of age, God had bestowed upon us an infant of wonderful beauty. It was a little girl, and we already began to ask ourselves the question, whether we ought not, for the advantage of the new-comer, to quit our solitude, and, the better to bring up this precious gift of Heaven, to remove to some more inhabited place. Poor people, to be sure, cannot in these cases do all you may think they ought, Sir knight, but still, gracious God! every one must do as much for his children as he possibly can.

"*Well, I went* on my way, and this affair would *keep running in* my head: it put my mind into a per-

fect whirl. This tongue of land was most dear to me, and I shrunk from the thought of leaving it, when, amidst the bustle and brawls of the city, I was obliged to reflect in this manner by myself: 'In a scene of tumult like this, or at least in one not much more quiet, I too must soon take up my abode.' But in spite of these feelings, I was far from murmuring against the kind providence of God; on the contrary, when I received this new blessing, my heart breathed a prayer of thankfulness too deep for words to express. I should also speak an untruth, were I to say, that any thing befell me, either on my passage through the forest to the city, or on my returning homeward, that gave me more alarm than usual, as at that time I had never seen any appearance there, which could terrify or annoy me. In those awful shades the Lord was ever with me, and I felt his presence as my best security."

Thus speaking, he took his cap reverently from his bald crown, and continued to sit for a considerable time in a state of devout thoughtfulness. He then covered himself again, and went on with his relation:

"On this side the forest—alas! it was on this side, that woe burst upon me. My wife came wildly to meet me, clad in mourning apparel, and her eyes streaming with tears. 'Gracious God!' I cried with a groan; 'where's our child? Speak!'

"'With the Being on whom you have called, dear husband,' she answered; and we now entered the cottage together, weeping in silence. I looked for the little corse, almost fearing to find what I was seeking, and then it was I first learnt how all had happened.

"My wife had taken the little one in her arms, and walked out to the shore of the lake. She there sat down by its very brink; and while she was playing with the infant, as free from all fear as she was full of delight, it bent forward on a sudden, seeing something in the water, a perfect fairy wonder of beauty. My wife saw her laugh, the dear angel, and try to catch the image in her little hands; but in a moment,—with a motion swifter than sight,—she sprung from her mother's arms, and sunk in the lake, the watery glass into which she had been gazing. I searched for our lost darling again and again, but it was all in vain. I could nowhere find the least trace of her.

"Well, our little one was gone. We were again childless parents, and were now, on the same evening, sitting together by our cottage hearth. We had no desire to talk, even would our tears have permitted us. As we thus sat in mournful stillness, gazing into the fire, all at once we heard something without,—a slight rustling at the door. The door flew open, and we saw a little girl, three or four years old, and more beautiful than I am able to tell you, standing on the threshold, richly dressed and smiling upon us. We were struck dumb with astonishment, and I knew not for a time, whether the tiny form were a real human being, or a mere mockery of enchantment. But I soon perceived water dripping from her golden hair and rich garments, and that the pretty child had been lying in the water, and stood in immediate need of our help.

"'Wife,' said I, 'no one has been able to save our child for us; still we doubtless ought to do for others *what would* make ourselves the happiest parents on *earth, could* any one do us the same kindness.'

"We undressed the little thing, put her to bed, and gave her something warming to drink: at all this she spoke not a word, but only turned her eyes upon us, eyes blue and bright as sea or sky, and continued looking at us with a smile.

"Next morning, we had no reason to fear that she had received any other harm than her wetting, and I now asked her about her parents, and how she could have come to us. But the account she gave was both confused and incredible. She must surely have been born far from here, not only because I have been unable for these fifteen years to learn anything of her birth, but because she then spoke, and at times continues to speak many things of so very singular a nature, that we neither of us know, after all, whether she may not have dropped among us from the moon. Then her talk runs upon golden castles, crystal domes, and Heaven knows what extravagancies beside. What of her story, however, she related with most distinctness, and what appeared to have in it some shadow of likelihood, was this, that while she was once taking a sail with her mother on the great lake, she fell out of the boat into the water; and that when she first recovered her senses, she was here under our trees, where the gay scenes of the shore filled her with delight.

"We now had another care weighing upon our minds, and one that caused us no small perplexity and uneasiness. We of course very soon determined to keep and bring up the child we had found, in place of our own darling that had been drowned; but who could tell us whether she had been baptized or not? She herself could give us no light on the subject. When we asked her *the question*, she commonly made an-

swer, that she well knew she was created for God's praise and glory; and that as to what might promote the praise and glory of God, she was willing to let us determine.

"My wife and I reasoned in this way: 'If she has not been baptized, there can be no use in putting off the ceremony; and if she has been it is more dangerous, in regard to the duties of religion, to do too little than too much.'

"Taking this view of our difficulty, we now endeavoured to hit upon a good name for the child, since while she remained without one we were often at a loss, in our familiar talk, to know what to call her. We at length concluded, that Dorothea would be most suitable for her, as I had somewhere heard it said, that this name signified *a Gift of God;* and surely she had been sent to us by Providence as a gift to comfort us in our misery. She, on the contrary, would not so much as hear Dorothea mentioned: she insisted, that as she had been named Undine by her parents, Undine she ought still to be called.

"It now occurred to me that this was a heathenish name, to be found in no calendar, and I resolved to ask the advice of a priest in the city. He too would hear nothing of the name, Undine, even for a moment; and yielding to my urgent request, he came with me through the enchanted forest, in order to perform the rite of baptism here in my cottage.

"The little maid stood before us so smart in her finery, and with so winning an air of gracefulness, that the heart of the priest softened at once in her *presence;* and she had a way of coaxing him so adroitly, *and even of* braving him at times with so merry a

queerness, that he at last remembered nothing of many objections to the name of Undine.

"Thus then was she baptized Undine; and dur the holy ceremony she behaved with great propr and gentleness, wild and wayward as at other ti she invariably was. For in this my wife was q correct when she mentioned the care, anxiety, vexation the child has occasioned us. If I should late to you"——

At this moment the knight interrupted the fisl man, with a view to direct his attention to a d sound, as of a rushing flood, which had caught his within a few minutes, between the words of the man. And now the waters came pouring on with doubled fury before the cottage windows. Both spr to the door. There they saw, by the light of the risen moon, the brook which issued from the w rushing wildly over its banks, and whirling onw with it both stones and branches of trees in its r course. The storm, as if awakened by the upr burst forth from the clouds, whose immense masse vapour coursed over the moon with the swiftnes thought; the lake roared beneath the wind that sw the foam from its waves; while the trees of this nar peninsula groaned from root to top-most branch as t bowed and swung above the torrent.

"Undine! in God's name, Undine!" cried the men in an agony. No answer was returned; and r regardless of every thing else, they hurried from cottage, one in this direction, the other in that, sear ing and calling.

CHAPTER III.

How they found Undine again.

The longer Huldbrand sought Undine beneath the shades of night, and failed to find her, the more anxious and confused he became. The impression that she was a mere phantom of the forest, gained a new ascendancy over him;—indeed, amid the howling of the waves and the tempest, the crashing of the trees, and so entire a transformation of the scene, that it discovered no resemblance to its former calm beauty, he was tempted to view the whole peninsula, together with the cottage and its inhabitants, as little more than some mockery of his senses; but still he heard, afar off, the fisherman's anxious and incessant shouting, "Undine! Undine!" and also his aged wife, who, with a loud voice and a strong feeling of awe, was praying and chanting hymns amid the commotion.

At length, when he drew near to the brook which had overflowed its banks, he perceived by the moonlight, that it had taken its wild course directly in front of the haunted forest, so as to change the peninsula into an island.

"Merciful God!" he breathed to himself, "if Undine has ventured one step within that fearful wood, what will become of her?—perhaps it was all owing to her sportive and wayward spirit, because I could give her no account of my adventures there; and now the *stream is rolling* between us, she may be weeping alone *on the other side* in the midst of spectral horrors!"

A shuddering groan escaped him, and clambering over some stones and trunks of overthrown pines, in order to step into the impetuous current, he resolved, either by wading or swimming, to seek the wanderer on the further shore. He felt, it is true, all the dread and shrinking awe creeping over him, which he had already suffered by daylight among the now tossing and roaring branches of the forest. More than all, a tall man in white, whom he knew but too well, met his view, as he stood grinning and nodding on the grass beyond the water; but even monstrous forms, like this, only impelled him to cross over toward them, when the thought rushed upon him, that Undine might be there alone, and in the agony of death.

He had already grasped a stout branch of a pine, and stood supporting himself upon it in the whirling current, against which he could with difficulty keep himself erect; but he advanced deeper in, with a courageous spirit. That instant, a gentle voice of warning cried near him: "Do not venture, do not venture! that old man, the stream, is too tricksy to be trusted!"—He knew the soft tones of the voice; and while he stood as it were entranced, beneath the shadows which now duskily veiled the moon, his head swum with the swell and rolling of the waves, as he every moment saw them foaming and dashing above his knee. Still he disdained the thought of giving up his purpose.

"If you are not really there, if you are merely gamboling round me like a mist, may I too bid farewell to life, and become a shadow like you, dear, dear Undine!" Thus calling aloud, he again moved deeper into the stream. "Look round you, ah, pray look round you, *beautiful young* stranger! why rush on death so

madly!" cried the voice a second time close by him; and looking side-ways, as the moon by glimpses unveiled its light, he perceived a little island, formed by the flood, and, reclined upon its flowery turf, beneath the high branches of embowering trees, he saw the smiling and lovely Undine.

O! with what a thrill of delight, compared with the suspense and pause of a moment before, the young man now plied his sturdy staff! A few steps freed him from the flood that was rushing between himself and the maiden, and he stood near her on the little spot of green-sward, in secret security, covered by the primeval trees that rustled above them. Undine had partially risen, within her tent of verdure, and she now threw her arms around his neck, so that she gently drew him down upon the soft seat by her side.

"Here you shall tell me your story, my handsome friend," she breathed in a low whisper; "here the cross old people cannot disturb us. And, besides, our roof of leaves here, will make quite as good a shelter, it may be, as their poor cottage."

"It is heaven itself," cried Huldbrand; and folding her in his arms, he kissed the lovely and affectionate girl with fervour.

The old fisherman, meantime, had come to the margin of the stream, and he shouted across to the young lovers: "Why how is this, Sir knight! I received you with the welcome which one true-hearted man gives to another, and now you sit there caressing my foster-child in secret, while you suffer me in my anxiety to go roaming through the night in quest of her."

"*Not till this* moment did I find her myself, old *father,*" *cried the* knight across the water.

"So much the better," said the fisherman; "but now make haste, and bring her over to me upon firm ground."

To this, however, Undine would by no means consent. She declared that she would rather enter the wild forest itself with the beautiful stranger, than return to the cottage, where she was so thwarted in her wishes, and from which the handsome knight would soon or late go away. Then closely embracing Huldbrand, she sung the following verse with the warbling sweetness of a bird:

"A RILL would leave its misty vale,
And fortunes wild explore;
Weary at length it reached the main,
And sought its vale no more."

The old fisherman wept bitterly at her song, but his emotion seemed to awaken little or no sympathy in her. She kissed and caressed her new friend, whom she called her darling, and who at last said to her: "Undine, if the distress of the old man does not touch your heart, it cannot but move mine. We ought to return to him."

She opened her large blue eyes upon him in perfect amazement, and finally spoke with a slow and lingering accent: "If you think so,—it is well; all is right to me, which you think right. But the old man over there must first give me his promise that he will allow you, without objection, to relate what you saw in the wood, and——well, other things will settle themselves."

"Come, do only come!" cried the fisherman to her, unable to utter another word. At the same time, he stretched his arms wide over the current toward her,

and, to give her assurance that he would do what she required, nodded his head; this motion caused his white hair to fall strangely over his face, and Huldbrand could not but remember the nodding white man of the forest. Without allowing anything, however, to produce in him the least confusion, the young knight took the beautiful girl in his arms, and bore her across the narrow channel which the stream had torn away between her little island and the solid shore. The old man fell upon Undine's neck, and found it impossible either to express his joy, or to kiss her enough; even the ancient dame came up and embraced the recovered girl most cordially. Every word of censure was carefully avoided; the more so indeed, as even Undine, forgetting her waywardness, almost overwhelmed her foster-parents with caresses and the prattle of tenderness.

When at length, after they were able to realize the joy of recovering their child, they seemed to have come to themselves; morning had already dawned, opening to view and brightening the waters of the lake. The tempest had beeome hushed, and small birds sung merrily on the moist branches.

As Undine now insisted upon hearing the recital of the knight's promised adventures, the aged couple, smiling with good humour, consented to gratify her wish. Breakfast was brought out beneath the trees, which stood behind the cottage toward the lake on the north, and they sat down to it with delighted hearts,—Undine lower than the rest (since she would by no means allow it to be otherwise) at the knight's feet on the grass. These arrangements being made, Huldbrand began his story in the following manner

CHAPTER IV.

Of what happened to the Knight in the Forest.

"It is now about eight days since I rode into the free imperial city, which lies yonder on the further side of the forest. Soon after my arrival, a splendid tournament and running at the ring took place there, and I spared neither my horse nor my lance in the encounters.

"Once, while I was pausing at the lists, to rest from the brisk exercise, and was handing back my helmet to one of my attendants, a female figure of extraordinary beauty caught my attention, as, most magnificently attired, she stood looking on at one of the balconies. I learnt, on making inquiry of a person near me, that the name of the gay young lady was Bertalda, and that she was a foster daughter of one of the powerful dukes of this country. She too, I observed, was gazing at me, and the consequences were such, as we young knights are wont to experience: whatever success in riding I might have had before, I was now favoured with still better fortune. That evening I was Bertalda's partner in the dance, and I enjoyed the same distinction during the remainder of the festival."

A twinge of pain in his left hand, as it hung carelessly beside him, here interrupted Huldbrand's relation, and drew his eye to the part affected. Undine had fastened her pearly teeth, and not without some keenness too, upon one of his fingers, appearing as

the same time very gloomy and displeased. On a sudden, however, she looked up in his eyes with an expression of tender melancholy, and whispered almost inaudibly:

"You blame me for being rude, but you are yourself the cause."

She then covered her face, and the knight, strangely embarrassed and thoughtful, went on with his story:

"This lady Bertalda of whom I spoke, is of a proud and wayward spirit. The second day I saw her, she pleased me by no means so much as she had the first, and the third day still less. But I continued about her, because she showed me more favour than she did any other knight; and the result of my indiscretion was, that I playfully asked her to give me one of her gloves.

"'When you have entered the haunted forest all alone,' said she; 'when you have explored its wonders, and brought me a full account of them, the glove is yours.'

"As to getting her glove, it was of no importance to me whatever, but the word had been spoken, and no honourable knight would permit himself to be reminded of such a proof of valour a second time."

"I thought," said Undine, interrupting him, "that she felt an affection for you."

"It did appear so," replied Huldbrand.

"Well!" exclaimed the maiden, laughing, "this is beyond belief; she must be very stupid and heartless. To drive from her one who was dear to her! And, worse than all, into that ill-omened wood! The wood and its mysteries, for all I should have cared, might have waited a long while."

"*Yesterday* morning, then," pursued the knight,

smiling brightly upon Undine, "I set out from the city, my enterprise before me. The early light lay rich upon the verdant turf. It shone so rosy on the slender boles of the trees, and there was so merry a whispering among the leaves, that in my heart I could not but laugh at people, who feared meeting anything to terrify them in a spot so delicious. 'I shall soon trot through the forest, and as speedily return,' I said to myself in the overflow of joyous feeling; and ere I was well aware, I had entered deep among the green shades, while of the plain that lay behind me, I was no more able to catch a glimpse.

"Then the conviction for the first time impressed me, that in a forest of so great extent I might very easily become bewildered, and that this perhaps might be the only danger which was likely to threaten those who explored its recesses. So I made a halt, and turned myself in the direction of the sun, which had meantime risen somewhat higher; and while I was looking up to observe it, I saw something black among the boughs of a lofty oak. My first thought was,—'It is a bear!' and I grasped my weapon of defence; the object then accosted me from above in a human voice, but in a tone most harsh and hideous: 'If I overhead here do not gnaw off these dry branches, Sir Wiseacre Noodle, what shall we have to roast you with when midnight comes?' And with that it grinned, and made such a rattling with the branches, that my courser became mad with affright, and rushed furiously forward with me before I had time to see distinctly what sort of a devil's beast it was."

"You must not name it," said the old fisherman, *crossing himself; his* wife did the same without speak-

ing a word; and Undine, while her eye sparkled with glee, looked at her beloved knight and said: "The best of the story is, however, that as yet they have not actually roasted you. But pray make haste, my handsome young friend. I long to hear more."

The knight then went on with his adventures: "My horse was so wild that he well-nigh rushed with me against limbs and trunks of trees. He was dripping with sweat through terror, heat, and the violent straining of his muscles. Still he refused to slacken his career. At last, altogether beyond my control, he took his course directly up a stony steep; when suddenly a tall white man flashed before me, and threw himself athwart the route my mad steed was taking. At this apparition he shuddered with new affright, and stopped trembling. I took this chance of recovering my command of him, and now for the first time perceived that my deliverer, so far from being a white MAN, was only a brook of silver brightness, foaming near me in its descent from the hill, while it crossed and arrested my horse's course with its rush of waters."

"Thanks, thanks, dear brook," cried Undine, clapping her little hands. But the old man shook his head, and deeply musing, looked vacantly down before him.

"Hardly had I well settled myself in my saddle, and got the reins in my grasp again," Huldbrand pursued, "when a wizard-like dwarf of a man was already standing at my side, diminutive and ugly beyond conception, his complexion of a brownish yellow, and his nose scarcely of less magnitude than all the rest of him. The fellow's mouth was slit almost from ear to ear, and he showed his teeth with a simpering smile of idiot courtesy, while he overwhelmed me with bows and

scrapes innumerable. The farce now becoming excessively irksome, I thanked him in the fewest words I could well use, turned about my still trembling charger, and purposed either to seek another adventure, or, should I meet with none, to pick my way back to the city; for the sun during my wild chase had passed the meridian, and was now hastening toward the west. But this villain of a manikin sprung at the same instant, and, with a turn as rapid as lightning, stood before my horse again. 'Clear the way there!' I fiercely shouted: 'the beast is wild, and will make nothing of running over you,'

"'He will, will he!' cried the imp with a snarl, and snorting out a laugh still more frightfully idiotic; 'pay me, first pay what you owe me,—I stopt your fine little nag for you; without my help, both you and he would be now sprawling below there in that stony ravine: Hu! from what a horrible plunge I've saved you.'

"'Well, pray don't stretch your mouth any wider,' said I, 'but take your drink-money and off, though every word you say is false. See, it was the kind brook there, you miserable thing, and not you that saved me.' And at the same time I dropt a piece of gold into his wizard cap, which he had taken from his head while he was begging before me.

"I then trotted off, and left him; but, to make bad worse, he screamed after me, and on a sudden, with inconceivable quickness, he was close by my side. I started my horse into a gallop; he galloped on with me, impossible for him as it appeared; and with this strange movement, half ludicrous and half horrible, forcing *at the same time* every limb and feature into *distortion, he kept raising* the gold piece as high as he

could stretch his arm, and screaming at every leap: 'Counterfeit! false! false coin! counterfeit!' and such were the croaking sounds that issued from his hollow breast, you would have supposed, that, every time he made them, he must have tumbled upon the ground dead. All this while, his disgustful red tongue hung lolling far out of his mouth.

"Discomposed at the sight, I stopt and asked him: 'What do you mean by your screaming? Take another piece of gold, take two more,—but leave me.'

"He then began to make his hideous salutations of courtesy again, and snarled out as before: 'Not gold, it shall not be gold, my smart young gentleman; I have too much of that trash already as I will show you in no-time.'

"At that moment, and thought itself could not have been more instantaneous, I seemed to have acquired new powers of sight. I could see through the solid green plain, as if it were green glass, and the smooth surface of the earth were round as a globe; and within it I saw crowds of goblins, who were pursuing their pastime, and making themselves merry with silver and gold. They were tumbling and rolling about, heads up and heads down; they pelted one another in sport with the precious metals, and with irritating malice blew gold dust in one another's eyes. My odious companion stood half within and half without; he ordered the others to reach him up a vast quantity of gold; this he showed to me with a laugh, and then flung it again ringing and chinking down the measureless abyss.

"*After this* contemptuous disregard of gold, he held *up the piece I had* given him, showing it to his brother *gnomes below*, and they laughed themselves half dead

at a bit so worthless, and hissed me. At last, raising their fingers all smutched with ore, they pointed them at me in scorn, and wilder and wilder, and thicker and thicker, and madder and madder, the crowd were clambering up to where I sat gazing at these wonders. Then terror seized me, as it had before seized my horse. I gave him both spurs to the quick; and how far he rushed headlong with me through the forest, during this second of my wild heats, it is impossible to say.

"At last, when I had now come to a dead halt again, the cool of evening was around me. I caught the gleam of a white foot-path through the branches of the trees; and presuming it would lead me out of the forest toward the city, I was desirous of working my way into it; but a face perfectly white and indistinct, with features forever changing, kept thrusting itself out and peering at me between the leaves. I tried to avoid it, but wherever I went, there too appeared the unearthly face. I was maddened with rage at this interruption, and drove my steed at the appearance full-tilt: when such a cloud of white foam came rushing upon me and my horse, that we were almost blinded and glad to turn about and escape. Thus from step to step it forced us on, and ever aside from the foot-path, leaving us, for the most part, only one direction open. But when we advanced in this, although it kept following close behind us, it did not occasion the smallest harm or inconvenience.

"At times, when I looked about me at the form, I perceived that the white face, which had splashed upon us its shower *of foam*, was resting on a body equally *white and of more than* gigantic size. Many a time

too, I received the impression, that the whole appearance was nothing more than a wandering stream or torrent, but respecting this I could never attain to any certainty. We both of us, horse and rider, became weary, as we shaped our course according to the movements of the white man, who continued nodding his head at us, as if he would say: 'Perfectly right! perfectly right!'—And thus, at length, we came out here at the edge of the wood, where I saw the fresh turf, the waters of the lake, and your little cottage, and where the tall white man disappeared."

"Well, Heaven be praised that he is gone!" cried the old fisherman; and he now fell to considering how his guest could most conveniently return to his friends in the city. Upon this, Undine began tittering to herself, but so very low that the sound was hardly perceivable. Huldbrand, observing it, said: "I had hoped you would see me remain here with pleasure; why then do you now appear so happy, when our talk turns upon my going away?"

"Because you cannot go away," answered Undine. "Pray make a single attempt; try with a wherry, with your horse, or alone, as you please, to cross that forest stream which has burst its bounds. Or rather, make no trial at all, for you would be dashed to pieces by the stones and trunks of trees, which you see driven on with such violence. And as to the lake, I am well acquainted with that; even my father dares not venture out with his wherry far enough to help you."

Huldbrand rose, smiling, in order to look about, and observe whether the state of things were such as Undine had represented it to be; the old man accompanied him, and the maiden, in mockery, went gamboling

and playing her antics beside them. They found all in fact, just as Undine had said, and that the knight, whether willing or not willing, must submit to remain on the island, so lately a peninsula, until the flood should subside.

When the three were now returning to the cottage, after their ramble, the knight whispered the little girl in her ear: "Well, dear Undine, how is it with you? Are you angry on account of my remaining?"

"Ah," she pettishly made answer, "not a word of that. If I had not bitten you, who knows what fine things you would have put into your story about Bertalda!"

CHAPTER V.

How the Knight lived on the point of land, now encircled by the lake.

At some period of your life, my dear reader, after manifold triumphs and repulses in the crusade of the world, you may have reached a situation where you were happy; that love for the calm security of our own fireside, which we all feel as an affection born with us, again rose within you; you imagined that your home would again bloom forth, as from a cherished grave with all the flowers of childhood, the purest and most impassioned love; and that, in such a spot, it must be delightful to take up your abode, and build your tabernacle for life.

Whether you were mistaken in this persuasion, and afterward made a severe expiation for your error of judgment, it suits not my purpose to inquire, and you would be unwilling yourself, it may be, to be saddened by a recollection so ungrateful. But again awake within you that foretaste of bliss, so inexpressibly sweet, that angelic salutation of peace, and you will be able, perchance, to realize something of the knight Huldbrand's happiness, the tender visions of his heart, while he remained on the point of land, now surrounded by the lake.

He frequently observed, and no doubt with heartfelt *satisfaction, that* the forest-stream continued every day *to swell and* roll on with a more impetuous sweep;

that, by tearing away the earth, it scooped out a broader and broader channel; and that the time of his seclusion on the island became, in consequence, more and more extended. Part of the day he wandered about with an old cross-bow, which he found in a corner of the cottage, and had repaired, in order to shoot the water-fowl that flew over; and all that he was lucky enough to hit, he brought home for a good roast in the kitchen. When he came in with his booty, Undine seldom failed to greet him with a scolding, because he had cruelly deprived her dear merry friends of life, as they were sporting above in the blue ocean of the air; nay more, she often wept bitterly, when she viewed the water-fowl dead in his hand. But at other times, when he returned without having shot any, she gave him a scolding equally serious, since, owing to his indolent strolling and awkward handling of the bow, they must now put up with a dinner of pickerel and crawfish. Her playful taunts ever touched his heart with delight; the more so, as she afterwards strove to make up for her pretended ill-humour with that most endearing of prattle, of which lovers alone are able to understand the value.

In this familiarity of the young people, their aged friends saw a resemblance to the feelings of their own youth: they appeared to look upon them as betrothed, or even as a young married pair, that lived with them in their age, to afford them assistance on their island, now torn off from the mainland. His retired situation, too, strongly impressed young Huldbrand with the feeling that he was already Undine's bridegroom. It seemed to him, *as if*, beyond those encompassing *floods, there were no* other world in existence, or at

any rate as if he could never cross them, and again associate with the world of other men; and when at times his grazing steed raised his head and neighed to him, seemingly inquiring after his knightly achievements and reminding him of them, or when his coat of arms sternly shone upon him from the embroidery of his saddle, and the caparisons of his horse, or when his sword happened to fall from a nail on which it was hanging in the cottage, and flashed on his eye as it slipped from the scabbard in its fall,—he quieted the dubious suggestions of his mind, by saying to himself: "Undine cannot be a fisherman's daughter; she is, in all probability, a native of some remote region, and a member of some illustrious family."

There was one thing, indeed, to which he had a strong aversion: this was to hear the old dame reprimanding Undine. The wild girl, it is true, commonly laughed at the reproof, making no attempt to conceal the extravagance of her mirth; but it appeared to him like touching his own honour; and still he found it impossible to blame the aged wife of the fisherman, since Undine always deserved at least ten times as many reprimands as she received: so he continued to feel in his heart an affectionate tenderness for them all, even for the ancient mistress of the house, and his whole life flowed on in the calm stream of contentment.

But still there came some interruption at last. The fisherman and the knight had been accustomed at dinner, and also in the evening, when the wind roared without, as it rarely failed to do toward night, to enjoy together a flask of wine. But now their whole stock, *which the fis*herman had from time to time brought *with him from* the city, was at last exhausted, and they

were both quite out of humour at the circumstance. That day Undine laughed at them excessively, but they were not disposed to join in her pleasantries with the same gaiety as usual. Toward evening she went out of the cottage, to escape, as she said, the sight of two such lengthened and tiresome faces.

While it was yet twilight, some appearances of a tempest seemed to be again mustering in the sky, and the waves already rushed and roared around them: the knight and the fisherman sprung to the door in terror, to bring home the maiden, remembering the anguish of that night, when Huldbrand had first entered the cottage. But Undine met them at the same moment, clapping her little hands in high glee.

"What will you give me," she cried, "to provide you with wine? or rather, you need not give me any thing," she continued; "for I am already satisfied, if you look more cheerful, and have a livelier flow of spirits, than throughout this last most wearisome day. Do only come with me one minute; the forest-stream has driven ashore a cask; and I will be condemned to sleep a whole week, if it is not a wine-cask."

The men followed her, and actually found, in a bushy cove of the shore, a cask, which inspired them with as much joy, as if they were sure it contained the generous old wine, for which they were thirsting. They first of all, and with as much expedition as possible, rolled it toward the cottage; for a heavy shower was again rising in the west, and they could discern the waves of the lake, in the fading light, lifting their white foaming heads, as if looking out for the rain, which threatened every instant to pour upon them. *Undine helped them, as* much as she was able; and as

the shower, with a roar of wind, came suddenly sweeping on in rapid pursuit, she raised her finger with a merry menace toward the dark mass of clouds, and cried:

"You cloud, you cloud, have a care!—beware how you wet us; we are some way from shelter yet."

The old man reproved her for this sally, as a sinful presumption; but she laughed to herself with a low tittering, and no one suffered any evil from her wild behaviour. Nay more, what was beyond their expectation, they all three reached their comfortable hearth unwet, with their prize secured; but the moment the cask had been broached, and proved to contain wine of a remarkably fine flavour, than the rain first poured unrestrained from the black cloud, the tempest raved through the tops of the trees, and swept far over the billows of the deep.

Having immediately filled several bottles from the large cask, which promised them a supply for a long time, they drew round the glowing hearth; and comfortably secured from the violence of the storm, they sat tasting the flavour of their wine, and bandying their quips and pleasantries.

As reflection returned upon him, the old fisherman all at once became very grave, and said: "Ah, great God! here we sit, rejoicing over this rich gift, while he to whom it first belonged, and from whom it was wrested by the fury of the stream, must there also, it is more than probable, have lost his life."

"His fate, I trust, was not quite so melancholy as that," said Undine, while, smiling, she filled the *knight's cup* to the brim.

But he exclaimed: "By my unsullied honour, old

father, if I knew where to find and rescue him, no exposure to the night, nor any thought of peril, should deter me from making the attempt. But I give you all the assurance I am able to give, that provided I ever reach an inhabited country again, I will find out the owner of this wine or his heirs, and make double and triple reimbursement."

The old man was gratified with this assurance; he gave the knight a nod of approbation, and now drained his cup with an easier conscience and a more delicate relish.

Undine, however, said to Huldbrand: "As to the repayment and your gold, you may do whatever you like. But what you said about your venturing out, and searching, and exposing yourself to danger, appears to me far from wise. I should cry my very eyes out, should you perish there on such a wild jaunt; and is it not true, that you would prefer staying here with me and the good wine?"

"Most assuredly," answered Huldbrand, smiling.

"Well," replied Undine, "you spoke unwisely then. For charity begins at home; our neighbour ought not to be our first thought; and whatever is a calamity to him, would be one in our own case also."

The mistress of the house turned away from her, sighing and shaking her head, while the fisherman forgot his wonted indulgence toward the graceful little girl, and thus reproved her:

"That sounds exactly as if you had been brought up by heathens and Turks; and he finished his reproof by adding: "May God forgive both me and you —unfeeling child!"

"Well, *say what you will*, this is what I think and

feel," replied Undine, "be they who they may th brought me up,—and how can a thousand of yo words help it?"

"Silence!" exclaimed the fisherman, in a voice stern rebuke; and she, who with all her wild spi was at the same time extremely alive to fear, shru from him, moved close up to Huldbrand, trembli and breathed this question in the lowest tone possibl

"Are you also angry, dear friend?"

The knight pressed her soft hand, and tende stroked her locks. He was unable to utter a word; his vexation, arising from the old man's severity ward Undine, closed his lips; and thus the two cou sat opposite to each other, at once heated with ang and in embarrassed silence.

CHAPTER VI.

A Wedding.

In the midst of this painful stillness, a low knocking was heard at the door, which struck them all with dismay. For there are times when a slight circumstance, coming unexpectedly upon, us startles us like something supernatural. But here it was a further source of alarm, that the enchanted forest lay so near them, and that their place of abode seemed at present inaccessible to the visit of any thing human. While they were looking upon one another in doubt, the knocking was again heard, accompanied with a deep groan. The knight sprang to seize his sword. But the old man said in a low whisper:

"If it be what I fear it is, no weapon of yours can protect us."

Undine, in the mean while, went to the door, and cried with the firm voice of fearless displeasure: "Spirits of the earth! if mischief be your aim, Kuhleborn shall teach you better manners."

The terror of the rest was increased by this wild speech; they looked fearfully upon the girl, and Huldbrand was just recovering presence of mind enough to ask what she meant, when a voice reached them from without:

"I am no spirit of the earth, though a spirit still in *its earthly body.* You that are within the cottage

there, if you fear God and would afford me assistance, open your door to me."

By the time these words were spoken, Undine had already opened it; and the lamp throwing a strong illumination upon the stormy night, they perceived an aged priest without, who stept back in terror, when his eye fell on a sight so unexpected, the vision of a little damsel of such exquisite beauty. Well might he think there must be magic in the wind, and witchcraft at work, where a form of such surpassing loveliness appeared at the door of so humble a dwelling. So he lifted up his voice in prayer:

"Let all good spirits praise the Lord God!"

"I am no spectre," said Undine with a smile. "Do you think indeed, I look so very frightful? And more, —you cannot but bear me witness yourself, that I am far from shrinking terrified at your holy words. I too have knowledge of God, and understand the duty of praising him; every one, to be sure, has his own way of doing this, and this privilege he meant we should enjoy, when he gave us being. Walk in, father; you will find none but worthy people here."

The holy man came bowing in, and cast round a glance of scrutiny, wearing at the same time a very placid and venerable air. But water was dropping from every fold of his dark garments, from his long white beard, and the white locks of his hair. The fisherman and the knight took him to another apartment, and furnished him with a change of raiment, while they handed his own suit into the room they had left, for the females to dry. The aged stranger thanked them *in a manner* the most humble and courteous, but on *the knight's offering* him his splendid cloak to wrap

round him, he could not be persuaded to take it, but chose instead an old grey overcoat that belonged to the fisherman.

They then returned to the common apartment. The mistress of the house immediately offered her great chair to the priest, and continued urging it upon him till she saw him fairly in possession of it. "You are old and exhausted," said she, "and are moreover a man of God."

Undine shoved under the stranger's feet her little cricket, on which at other times she used to sit near to Huldbrand, and showed herself, in thus promoting the comfort of the worthy old man, in the highest degree gentle and amiable. On paying him these little attentions, Huldbrand whispered some raillery in her ear, but she replied gravely:

"He is a minister of that Being, who created us all, and holy things are not to be treated with lightness."

The knight and the fisherman now refreshed the priest with food and wine; and when he had somewhat recovered his strength and spirits, he began to relate how he had the day before set out from his cloister, which was situated afar off beyond the great lake, in order to visit the bishop, and acquaint him with the distress, into which the cloister and its tributary villages had fallen, owing to the extraordinary floods. After a long and wearisome wandering, on account of the same rise of the waters, he had been this day compelled toward evening to procure the aid of a couple of stout boatmen, and cross over an arm of the lake which had burst its usual boundary.

"But hardly," continued he, "had our small ferry-*boat touched the* waves, when that furious tempest

burst forth, which is still raging over our heads. It seemed as if the billows had been waiting our approach, only to rush upon us with a madness the more wild. The oars were wrested from the grasp of my men in an instant; and shivered by the resistless force, they drove further and further out before us upon the waves. Unable to direct our course, we yielded to the blind power of nature, and seemed to fly over the surges toward your remote shore, which we already saw looming through the mist and foam of the deep. Then it was at last, that our boat turned short from its course, and rocked with a motion that became more and more wild and dizzy: I know not whether it was overset, or the violence of the motion threw me overboard. In my agony and struggle at the thought of a near and terrible death, the waves bore me onward, till one of them cast me ashore here beneath the trees of your island."

"Yes, an island!" cried the fisherman. "A short time ago it was only a point of land. But now, since the forest-stream and lake have become all but mad, it appears to be entirely changed."

"I observed something of it," replied the priest, "as I stole along the shore in the obscurity; and hearing nothing around me but a sort of wild uproar, I perceived at last, that the noise came from a point, exactly where a beaten footpath disappeared. I now caught the light in your cottage, and ventured hither, where I cannot sufficiently thank my heavenly Father, that, after preserving me from the waters, he has also conducted me to such pious people as you are: and the more so, as it is difficult to say, whether I shall *ever behold* any other persons in this world except you *four.*"

"What mean you by those words?" asked the fisherman.

"Can you tell me, then, how long this commotion of the elements will last?" returned the holy man. "And the years of my pilgrimage are many. The stream of my life may easily sink into the ground and vanish, before the overflowing of that forest-stream shall subside. Indeed, taking a general view of things, it is not impossible, that more and more of the foaming waters may rush in between you and yonder forest, until you are so far removed from the rest of the world, that your small fishing-canoe may be incapable of passing over, and the inhabitants of the continent entirely forget your age amid the dissipation and diversions of life."

At this melancholy foreboding, the old lady shrunk back with a feeling of alarm, crossed herself, and cried: "May God forbid!"

But the fisherman looked upon her with a smile, and said: "What a strange being is man! Suppose the worst to happen: our state would not be different, at any rate your own would not, dear wife, from what it is at present. For have you, these many years, been further from home than the border of the forest? And have you seen a single human being beside Undine and myself?—It is now only a short time since the coming of the knight and the priest. They will remain with us, even if we do become a forgotten island; so after all you will derive the best advantage from the disaster."

"I know not," replied the ancient dame, "it may be so; still it is a dismal thought, when brought fairly home *to the mind*, that we are for ever separated

from mankind, even though, in fact, we never do know nor see them."

"Then *you* will remain with us, then you will remain with us!" whispered Undine in a voice scarcely audible and half singing, while with the intense fervour of the heart she moved more and more closely to Huldbrand's side. But he was immersed in the deep and strange musings of his own mind. The region on the other side of the forest-river, since the last words of the priest, seemed to have been withdrawing further and further, in dim perspective, from his view; and the blooming island on which he lived, grew green and smiled more freshly before the eye of his mind. His bride glowed like the fairest rose,—not of this obscure nook only, but even of the whole wide world, and the priest was now present.

Beside these hopes and reveries of love, another circumstance influenced him: the mistress of the family was directing an angry glance at the fair girl, because, even in the presence of their spiritual director, she was leaning so fondly on her darling knight; and it seemed as if she was on the point of breaking out in harsh reproof. Then was the resolution of Huldbrand taken: his heart and mouth were opened; and, turning toward the priest, he said, "Father, you here see before you an affianced pair, and if this maiden and these worthy people of the island have no objection, you shall unite us this very evening."

The aged couple were both exceedingly surprised. They had often, it is true, anticipated an event of this nature, but as yet they had never mentioned it; and now when the knight made the attachment known, it *came upon them like* something wholly new and un-

expected. Undine became suddenly grave, and cast her eyes upon the floor in a profound reverie, while the priest made inquiries respecting the circumstances of their acquaintance, and asked the old people whether they gave their consent to the union. After a great number of questions and answers, the affair was arranged to the satisfaction of all; and the mistress of the house went to prepare the bridal apartment for the young couple, and also, with a view to grace the nuptial solemnity, to seek for two consecrated tapers, which she had for a long time kept by her.

The knight in the mean while busied himself about his gold chain, for the purpose of disengaging two of its links, that he might make an exchange of rings with his bride. But when she saw his object, she started from her trance of musing, and exclaimed:

"Not so! my parents were far from sending me into the world so perfectly destitute; on the contrary, they must have foreseen, even at so early a period, that such a night as this would come.'

Thus speaking, she was out of the room in a moment, and a moment after returned with two costly rings, of which she gave one to her bridegroom, and kept the other for herself. The old fisherman was beyond measure astonished at this; and his wife, who was just re-entering the room, was even more surprised than he, that neither of them had ever seen these jewels in the child's possession.

"My parents," said Undine, "made me sew these trinkets to that beautiful raiment, which I wore the very day I came to you. They also charged me on no account whatever, to mention them to any one before my nuptial evening. At the time of my coming,

therefore, I took them off in secret, and have kept them concealed to the present hour."

The priest now cut short all further questioning and wondering, while he lighted the consecrated tapers, placed them on a table, and ordered the bridal pair to stand directly before him. He then pronounced the few solemn words of the ceremony, and made them one; the elder couple gave the younger their blessing; and the bride, slightly trembling and thoughtful, leaned upon the knight.

The priest then spoke plainly and at once: "You are strange people after all; for why did you tell me you were the only inhabitants of the island? So far is this from being true, I have seen, the whole time I have been performing the ceremony, a tall, stately man, in a white mantle, stand opposite to me, looking in at the window. He must be still waiting before the door, if peradventure you would invite him to come in."

"God forbid!" cried the old lady, shrinking back; the fisherman shook his head without opening his lips, and Huldbrand sprang to the window, It appeared to *him*, that he could still discern some vestige of a form, white and indistinct as a vapour, but it soon wholly disappeared in the gloom. He convinced the priest that he must have been quite mistaken in his impression; and now, inspired with the freedom and familiarity of perfect confidence, they all sat down together round a bright and comfortable hearth.

CHAPTER VII.

What further happened on the evening of the wedding.

Before the nuptial ceremony, and during its performance, Undine had shown a modest gentleness and maidenly reserve; but it now seemed as if all the wayward freaks that effervesced within her, were foaming and bursting forth with an extravagance only the more bold and unrestrained. She teased her bridegroom, her foster-parents, and even the priest, whom she had but just now revered so highly, with all sorts of childish tricks and vagaries; and when the ancient dame was about to reprove her too frolicsome spirit, the knight, by a few serious and expressive words, imposed silence upon her by calling Undine his wife.

The knight was himself, indeed, just as little pleased with Undine's childish behaviour as the rest; but still, all his winking, hemming, and expressions of censure were to no purpose. It is true, whenever the bride observed the dissatisfaction of her husband,—and this occasionally happened,—she became more quiet, placed herself beside him, stroked his face with caressing fondness, whispered something smilingly in his ear, and in this manner smoothed the wrinkles that were gathering on his brow. But the moment after some wild whim would make her resume her antic movements, and all went worse than before.

The priest then spoke in a kind, although serious tone: "*My pleasant* young friend, surely no one can

witness your playful spirit without being diverted; but remember betimes so to attune your soul, that it may produce a harmony ever in accordance with the soul of your wedded bridegroom."

"Soul!" cried Undine, with a laugh, nearly allied to one of derision; "what you say has a remarkably pretty sound, and for most people, too, it may be a very instructive rule and profitable caution. But when a person has no soul at all, how, I pray you, can such attuning be possible? And this in truth is just my condition."

The priest was much hurt, but continued silent in holy displeasure, and turned away his face from the maiden in sorrow. She, however, went up to him with the most winning sweetness, and said:

"Nay, I entreat you, first listen to some particulars before you frown upon me in anger, for your frown of anger is painful to me, and by no means ought you to give pain to a creature, that has itself done nothing injurious to you. Only have patience with me, and I will explain to you every word of what I meant."

She had come to the resolution, it was evident, to give a full account of herself, when she suddenly faltered, as if seized with an inward shuddering, and burst into a passion of tears. They were none of them able to understand the intenseness of her feelings; and with mingled emotions of fear and anxiety, they gazed on her in silence. Then wiping away her tears, and looking earnestly at the priest, she at last said:

"There must be something lovely, but at the same time something most awful, about a *soul*. In the name of God, holy man, were it not better that we never *shared a gift so mysterious*?"

Again she paused and restrained her tears, as if waiting for an answer. All in the cottage had risen from their seats, and stepped back from her with horror. She, however, seemed to have eyes for no one but the holy man; a fearful curiosity was painted on her features, and this made her emotion appear terrible to the others.

"Heavily must the soul weigh down its possessor," she pursued, when no one returned her any answer, "very heavily! for already its approaching image overshadows me with anguish and mourning. And—alas! I have till now been so merry and light-hearted!" And she burst into another flood of tears, and covered her face with her veil.

The priest, going up to her with a solemn look, now addressed himself to her, and conjured her by the name of God most holy, if any evil or spirit of evil possessed her, to remove the light covering from her face. But she sunk before him on her knees, and repeated after him every sacred expression he uttered, giving praise to God, and protesting that she wished the well-being of the whole world.

The priest then spoke to the knight: "Sir bridegroom, I leave you alone with her, whom I have united to you in marriage. So far as I can discover, there is nothing of evil in her, but assuredly much that is wonderful. What I recommend to you in domestic life,—is prudence, love, and fidelity."

Thus speaking, he left the apartment, and the fisherman with his wife followed him, crossing themselves.

Undine had sunk upon her knees; she uncovered her *face and* exclaimed, while she looked fearfully

round upon Huldbrand: "Alas, you will now refuse to regard me as your own; and still I have done nothing evil, poor unhappy child!" She spoke these words with a look so infinitely sweet and touching, that her bridegroom forgot both the confession that had shocked, and the mystery that had perplexed him; and hastening to her, he raised her in his arms. She smiled through her tears, and that smile was like the dawn playing upon a small stream. "You cannot desert me!" she whispered with a confiding assurance, and stroked the knight's cheeks with her little soft hands. He was thus in some degree withdrawn from those terrible apprehensions, that still lay lurking in the recesses of his soul, and were persuading him that he had been married to a fairy, or some spiteful and mischievous being of the spirit-world; but, after all, only this single question, and that almost unawares, escaped from his lips:

"Dearest Undine, pray tell me this one thing; what was it you meant by 'spirits of the earth' and 'Kuhleborn,' when the priest stood knocking at the door?"

"Mere fictions! mere tales of children!" answered Undine, laughing, now quite restored to her wonted gaiety. "I first awoke your anxiety with them, and you finally awoke mine. This is the end of the story and of our nuptial evening."

"Nay, not exactly that," replied the enamoured knight, extinguishing the tapers, and a thousand times kissing his beautiful and beloved bride, while, lighted by the moon that shone brightly through the windows, he bore her into their own bridal apartment.

CHAPTER VIII.

The day after the wedding.

The fresh light of morning awoke the young married pair. Undine bashfully hid her face beneath their covering, and Huldbrand lay lost in silent reflection. Whenever during the night he had fallen asleep, strange and horrible dreams of spectres had disturbed him; and these shapes, grinning at him by stealth, strove to disguise themselves as beautiful females; and from beautiful females they all at once assumed the appearance of dragons. And when he started up, aroused by the intrusion of these hideous forms, the moonlight shone pale and cold before the windows without; he looked affrighted at Undine, in whose arms he had fallen asleep, and she was reposing in unaltered beauty and sweetness beside him. Then pressing her rosy lips with a light kiss, he again fell into a slumber, only to be awakened by new terrors.

When he had now perfectly awoke, and well considered all the circumstances of this connection, he reproached himself for any doubt, that could lead him into error in regard to his lovely wife. He also earnestly begged her pardon for the injustice he had done her, but she only gave him her fair hand, heaved a sigh from the depth of her heart, and remained silent. But a glance of fervent tenderness, an expression of the *soul beaming in* her eyes, such as he had never wit-

nessed there before, left him in undoubting assurance, that Undine was conscious of no evil design against him whatever.

He then rose with a serene mind, and, leaving her, went to the common apartment, where the inmates of the house had already met, The three were sitting round the hearth with an air of anxiety about them, as if they feared trusting themselves to raise their voice above a low apprehensive undertone. The priest appeared to be praying in his inmost spirit, with a view to avert some fatal calamity. But when they observed the young husband come forth so cheerful, a brighter hope rose within them, and dispelled the cloudy traces that remained upon their brows; yes, the old fisherman began to be facetious with the knight, but in a manner so perfectly becoming, that his aged wife herself could not help smiling with great good-humour.

Undine had in the mean time got ready, and now entered the door; when all were on the point of rushing to meet her, and yet all continued standing in perfect admiration, so changed and at the same time so familiar was the young woman's appearance. The priest, with paternal affection beaming from his countenance, first went up to her, and as he raised his hand to pronounce a blessing, the beautiful bride, trembling with devotion, sunk on her knees before him; she begged his pardon, in terms both respectful and submissive, for any foolish things she might have uttered the evening before, and entreated him, in a very pathetic tone, to pray for the welfare of her soul. She then rose, kissed her foster-parents, and, after thanking them for all the kindness *they had shown her*, said:

"*O, I now feel in my* inmost heart, how great, how

infinitely great, is what you have done for me, you dear, dear friends of my childhood!"

At first she was wholly unable to tear herself away from their affectionate caresses; but the moment she saw the good old mother busy in getting breakfast, she went to the hearth, applied herself to cooking the food and putting it on the table, and would not suffer her aged friend to take the least share in the work.

She continued in this frame of spirit the whole day; calm, kind, attentive;—at the same time a little mistress of a family, and a tender, modest young woman. The three, who had been longest acquainted with her, expected every instant to see her capricious spirit break out in some whimsical change or sportive vagary. But their fears were quite unnecessary. Undine continued as mild and gentle as an angel. The priest found it all but impossible to remove his eyes from her, and he often said to the bridegroom:

"The bounty of Heaven, Sir, making me its unworthy instrument, entrusted to you last evening an invaluable treasure; regard and cherish it as you ought to do, and it will promote your temporal and eternal welfare."

Toward evening, Undine was hanging upon the knight's arm with lowly tenderness, while she drew him gently out before the door, where the setting sun shone richly over the fresh grass, and upon the high, slender boles of the trees. Her emotion was visible: the dew of sadness and love swam in her eyes, while a tender and fearful secret hovered upon her lips; but sighs, and those scarcely perceptible, were all that made known the wish of her heart. She led her husband *further and further* onward without speaking. When

he asked her questions, she replied only with looks, in which, it is true, there appeared to be no immediate answer to his inquiries, but yet a whole heaven of love and timid attachment. Thus they reached the margin of the swollen forest-stream, and the knight was astonished to see it gliding away with so gentle a murmuring of its waves, that no vestige of its former swell and wildness was now discernible.

"By morning it will be wholly drained off," said the beautiful woman with an accent of weeping, "and you will then be able to travel, without any thing to hinder you, whithersoever you will."

"Not without you, dear Undine," replied the knight, laughing; "for pray remember, even were I disposed to leave you, both the church and the spiritual powers, the emperor and the laws of the realm, would require the fugitive to be seized and restored to you."

"All this depends on you, all depends on you;" whispered his little companion, half weeping and half smiling. "But I still feel sure that you will not leave me; I am in truth too fondly attached to you to fear that misery. Now bear me over to that little island, which lies before us. There shall the decision be made. I could easily, indeed, slip through that mere rippling of the water without your aid, but it is so grateful to rest in your arms; and should you determine to put me away, I shall have sweetly rested in them once more, ... for the last time."

Huldbrand was so full of strange anxiety and emotion, that he knew not what answer to make her. He took her in his arms and carried her over, now first *realizing the fact*, that this was the same little island, *from which he had* borne her back to the old fisherman,

the first night of his arrival. On the further side, he placed her upon the soft grass, and cherished with a lover's fondness the hope of sitting near his beautiful burden; but she said to him, "not here,—if you please, there, over against me. I shall read my doom in your eyes, even before your lips pronounce it: now listen very attentively to what I shall relate to you." And she began:

"You must know, my dear love, that there are beings in the elements, which bear the strongest resemblance to the human race, and which, at the same time, but seldom become visible to you. The wonderful salamanders sparkle and sport amid the flames; deep in the earth the meagre and malicious gnomes pursue their revels; the forest-spirits belong to the air, and wander in the woods; while in the seas, rivers, and streams live the wide-spread race of water-spirits. These last, beneath resounding domes of crystal, through which the sky appears with sun and stars, inhabit a region of light and beauty; lofty coral trees glow with blue and crimson fruits in their gardens; they walk over the pure sand of the sea, among infinitely variegated shells, and amid whatever of beauty the old world possessed, such as the present is no more worthy to enjoy;—creations, which the floods covered with their secret veils of silver; and now the noble monuments glimmer below, stately and solemn, and bedewed by the water which loves them, and calls forth from their crevices exquisite moss-flowers and enwreathing tufts of sedge.

"Now the nations that dwell there, are very fair and lovely to behold, for the most part more beautiful than human *beings*. Many a fisherman has been so fortu-

nate, as to catch a view of a delicate maiden of the waters, while she was floating and singing upon the deep. He then spread to remotest shores the fame of her beauty, and to such wonderful females men are wont to give the name of Undines. But what need of saying more?—You, my dear husband, now actually behold an Undine before you."

The knight would have persuaded himself, that his lovely wife was under the influence of one of her odd whims, and that she was only amusing herself and him with her extravagant inventions. He wished it might be so. But with whatever emphasis he said this to himself, he still could not credit the hope for a moment; a strange shivering shot through his soul; unable to utter a word, he gazed upon the sweet speaker with a fixed eye. She shook her head in distress, heaved a sigh from her full heart, and then proceeded in the following manner:

"In respect to the circumstances of our life, we should be far superior to yourselves, who are another race of the human family,—for we also call ourselves human beings, as we resemble them in form and features,—had we not one great evil peculiar to ourselves. Both we, and the beings I have mentioned as inhabiting the other elements, vanish into air at death, and go out of existence, spirit and body, so that no vestige of us remains; and when you hereafter awake to a purer state of being, we shall remain where sand, and sparks, and wind, and waves remain. We, of course have no souls; the element moves us, and, again, is obedient to our will, while we live, though it scatters us like dust, when we die; and as we have nothing to trouble *us, we are as merry* as nightingales, little goldfishes, *and other pretty* children of nature.

"But all beings aspire to rise in the scale of existence higher than they are. It was therefore the wish of my father, who is a powerful water-prince in the Meditteranean Sea, that his only daughter should become possessed of a soul, although she should have to endure many of the sufferings of those who share that gift.

"Now the race to which I belong, have no other means of obtaining a soul, than by forming with an individual of your own the most intimate union of love. I am now possessed of a soul, and I, the very soul itself, thank you, dear Huldbrand, with a warmth of heart beyond expression, and never shall I cease to thank you, unless you render my whole future life miserable. For what will become of me, if you avoid and reject me? I was not permitted, however, to retain you as my own by artifice. And should you decide to cast me off, then do it now, ... leave me here, and return to the shore alone. I will plunge into this brook, where my uncle will receive me: my uncle, who here in the forest, far removed from his other friends, passes his strange and solitary existence. But he is powerful, as well as revered and beloved by many great rivers; and as he brought me hither to our friends of the lake, a light-hearted and laughing child, he will also restore me to the home of my parents, a woman, possessing a soul, full of affection, and heir to suffering."

She was about to add something more, when Huldbrand, with the most heartfelt tenderness and love, clasped her in his arms, and again bore her back to the shore. There, amid tears and kisses, he first swore *never to forsake* his affectionate wife, and esteemed

himself even more happy than the Grecian sculptor, Pygmalion, for whom Venus gave life to his beautiful statue, and thus changed it into a beloved wife. Supported by his arm, and cherishing within her the sweet confidence of affection, Undine returned to the cottage; and now she first realized with her whole heart, how little cause she had for regretting what she had left, the crystal palaces of her mysterious father.

CHAPTER IX.

How the Knight took his young Wife with him.

Next morning when Huldbrand awoke from slumber, and perceived that his beautiful wife was not by his side, he began to give way again to his wild imaginations: these represented to him his marriage, and even the charming Undine herself, as only a shadow without substance, a mere illusion of enchantment. But she entered the door at the same moment, kissed him, seated herself on the bed by his side, and said:

"I have been out somewhat early this morning to see whether my uncle keeps his word. He has already restored the waters of the flood to his own calm channel, and he now flows through the forest a rivulet as before, in a lonely and dreamlike current. His friends too, both of the water and the air, have resumed their usual peaceful tenor; all in this region will again proceed with order and tranquillity; and you can travel homeward without fear of the flood, whenever you choose."

It seemed to the mind of Huldbrand, that he must be wrapt in some reverie or waking dream, so little was he able to understand the nature of his wife's trange relative. Notwithstanding this, he made no emark upon what she had told him, and the infinite harm of her beauty, gentleness, and affection soon lled every misgiving to rest.

Some time afterward, while he was standing with her fore *the door,* and surveying the verdant point of

land with its boundary of bright waters, such a feeling of bliss came over him in this cradle of his love, that he exclaimed:

"Shall we then, so early as to-day, begin our journey? Why should we? it is probable that abroad in the world we shall find no days more delightful than those we have spent in this little asylum, so secret and so secure. Let us remain here, and enjoy two or three more of its glorious sunsets."

"Just as my lord shall command," replied Undine, meekly. "Only we must remember that our aged friends will, at all events, think of my departure with pain; and should they now, for the first time, discover the true soul in me, and how fervently I can now love and honour them, their feeble eyes would surely become blind with weeping. As yet, they consider my present calm and exemplary conduct as of no better promise than my former occasional quietness,—merely the calm of the lake just while the air remains tranquil,—and they will now become as much accustomed to cherish a little tree or flower, as they have been to cherish me. Let me not then make known to them this newly bestowed, this love-inspired heart, at the very moment they must lose it for this world; and how could I conceal what I have gained, if we continued longer together?"

Huldbrand yielded to her representation, and went to the aged couple to confer with them respecting his journey, on which however he proposed to set out that very hour. The priest offered himself as a companion of the young married pair; and, after their taking a short farewell, he held the bridle, while the knight *lifted his beautiful* wife upon his horse; and with rapid

they crossed the dry channel with her toward the
ıt. Undine wept in silent but intense emotion;
ɔld people, as she moved away, were more clamor-
in the expression of their grief. They appeared
ɛl at this moment of separation a presentiment of
t they were losing in their affectionate foster-
ɣhter.

he three travellers reached the thickest shades o.
forest without interchanging a word. It would have
ı a picturesque sight in that hall of leafy verdure,
ɐe the figure of this lovely female sitting on the
le and richly ornamented steed, on her right hand
venerable priest in the white garb of his order, on
left the blooming young knight, clad in splendid
ıent of scarlet, gold, and violet, girt with a sword that
ıed in the sun, and attentively walking beside her.
dbrand had no eyes but for his fair wife; Undine,
had dried her tears of tenderness, had no eyes but
ıim; and they soon entered into the mute and
ɛeless converse of looks and gestures, from which
r some time they were awakened by the low dis-
ɾse, which the priest was holding with a fourth
ɛller, who had meanwhile joined them unobserved.
ſe wore a white gown, resembling in form the dress
he priest's order, except that his hood hung very
over his face, and that the whole drapery floated in
ı wide folds around him as obliged him every mo-
ıt to gather it up and throw it over his arm, or by
ıe management of this sort to get it out of his way,
still it did not seem in the least to incommode him
his movement. When the young couple became
ıre of his presence, he was saying:

And so, venerable Sir, many as have been the

years I have dwelt here in this forest, I have never received the name of hermit in your sense of the word. For, as I said before, I know nothing of penance, and I think too, that I have no particular need of it. Do you ask me why I am so attached to the forest? It is because its scenery is so peculiarly picturesque, and affords me so much pastime, when, in my floating white garments, I pass through its world of leaves and dusky shadows;—and then a sweet sunbeam glances down upon me at times before I think of it."

"You are a very singular man," replied the priest, "and I should like to have a more intimate acquaintance with you."

"And who then may you be yourself to pass from one thing to another?" inquired the stranger.

"I am called father Heilmann," answered the holy man, "and I am from the cloister of our Lady of the Salutation, beyond the lake."

"Well, well," replied the stranger, "my name is Kuhleborn, and were I a stickler for the nice distinctions of rank, I might with equal propriety require you to give me the title of noble lord of Kuhleborn, or free lord of Kuhleborn; for I am as free as a bird in the forest, and, it may be, a trifle more so. For example, I now have something to tell that young lady there." And before they were aware of his purpose, he was on the other side of the priest, close to Undine, and stretching himself high into the air, in order to whisper something in her ear. But she shrunk from him in terror, and exclaimed:

"I have nothing more to do with you."

"Ho, ho," cried the stranger with a laugh, "what *sort of a marriage* have you made, then, so monstrous

and genteel, since you no longer know your own relations? Have you no recollection of your uncle Kuhleborn, who so faithfully bore you on his back to this region?"

"However that may be," replied Undine, "I entreat you never to appear in my presence again. I am now afraid of you; and will not my husband fear and forsake me, if he sees me associate with such strange company and kindred?"

"You must not forget, my little niece," said Kuhleborn, "that I am with you here as a conductor; otherwise those madcap spirits of the earth, the gnomes that haunt this forest would play you some of their mischievous pranks. Let me therefore accompany you in peace; even the old priest there had a better recollection of me than you appear to have, for he just now assured me, that I seemed to be very familiar to him, and that I must have been with him in the ferry-boat, out of which he tumbled into the waves. He certainly did see me there, for I was no other than the water-spout that tore him out of it, and kept him from sinking, while I safely wafted him ashore to your wedding."

Undine and the knight turned their eyes upon father Heilmann; but he appeared to be moving forward, just as if he were dreaming or walking in his sleep, and no longer to be conscious of a word that was spoken. Undine then said to Kuhleborn; "I already see yonder the end of the forest. We have no further need of your assistance, and nothing now gives us alarm but yourself. I, therefore, beseech you by our mutual love and good will, to vanish and allow us to proceed in peace."

Kuhleborn seemed to be transported with fury at *this: he darted a frightful look at Undine, and grinned*

fiercely upon her. She shrieked aloud, and called her husband to protect her. The knight sprung round the horse as swift as lightning, and, brandishing his sword, struck at Kuhleborn's head. But, instead of severing it from his body, the sword merely flashed through a torrent, which rushed foaming near them from a lofty cliff; and with a splash, which much resembled in sound a burst of laughter, the stream all at once poured upon them, and gave them a thorough wetting. The priest, as if suddenly awaking from a trance, coolly observed: "This is what I have been some time expecting, because the brook has descended from the steep so close beside us,—though at first sight, indeed, it appeared to look just like a man, and to possess the power of speech."

As the waterfall came rushing from its crag, it distinctly uttered these words in Huldbrand's ear: "Rash knight! valiant knight! I am not angry with you; I have no quarrel with you; only continue to defend your charming little wife with the same spirit, you bold knight! you rash blade!"

After advancing a few steps further, the travellers came out upon open ground. The imperial city lay bright before them; and the evening sun, which gilded its towers with gold, kindly dried their garments that had been so completely drenched.

CHAPTER X.

How they lived in the city.

The sudden disappearance of the young knight, Huldbrand of Ringstetten, had occasioned much remark in the imperial city, and no small concern among those of the people, who, as well on account of his expertness in tourney and dance as in consequence of his mild and amiable manners, had become attached to him. His attendants were unwilling to quit the place without their master, although not a soul of them had been courageous enough to follow him into the fearful recesses of the forest. They remained therefore at their public house, in the indulgence of idle hope, as men are wont to do, and, by the expression of their fears, kept the fate of their lost lord fresh in remembrance.

Now when the violent storms and floods had been observed, immediately after his departure, the destruction of the handsome stranger became all but certain: even Bertalda had quite openly discovered her sorrow, and detested herself for having induced him to take that fatal excursion into the forest. Her foster-parents, the duke and duchess, had meanwhile come to take her away, but Bertalda persuaded them to remain with her until some certain news of Huldbrand should be obtained, whether he were living or dead. She endeavoured also to prevail upon several young knights, *who were assiduous* in courting her favour, to go in

quest of the noble adventurer in the forest. But she refused to pledge her hand as the reward of the enterprise, because she still cherished, it might be, a hope of its being claimed by the returning knight; and no one would consent, for a glove, a ribbon, or even a kiss, to expose his life to bring back a rival so very dangerous.

When Huldbrand now made his sudden and unexpected appearance, his attendants, the inhabitants of the city, and almost all the people rejoiced: we must acknowledge, indeed, that this was not the case with Bertalda; for although it might be quite a welcome event to others, that he brought with him a wife of such exquisite loveliness, and father Heilmann as a witness of their marriage, Bertalda could not but view the affair with grief and vexation. She had in truth become attached to the young knight with her whole soul, and then her mourning for his absence, or supposed death, had been more unreservedly shown, than she could now have wished.

But notwithstanding all this, she conducted herself like a prudent woman in circumstances of such delicacy, and lived on the most friendly terms with Undine, whom the whole city looked upon as a princess, that Huldbrand had rescued in the forest from some evil enchantment. Whenever any one questioned either herself or her husband relative to surmises of this nature, they had wisdom enough to remain silent, or wit enough to evade the inquiries. The lips of father Heilmann had been sealed in regard to idle gossip of every kind, and besides, on Huldbrand's arrival, he *had immediately* returned to his cloister; so that *people were obliged* to rest contented with their own

wild conjectures, and even Bertalda herself ascertained nothing more of the truth than others.

In addition to this state of things, Undine daily regarded this young lady with increasing fondness. "We must have been heretofore acquainted with each other," she often used to say to her, "or else there must be some mysterious connection between us; for it is incredible, that, one individual so perfectly without cause, I mean without some deep and secret cause, should be so fondly attached to another, as I have been to you from the first moment of our meeting."

Even Bertalda could not deny, that she felt a confiding impulse, an attraction of tenderness, toward Undine, much as she deemed this fortunate rival the cause of her bitterest disappointment. Under the influence of this mutual regard, they found means to persuade, the one her foster-parents, and the other her husband, to defer the day of separation to a period more and more remote; nay more, they had already begun to talk of a plan for Bertalda's accompanying Undine to Castle Ringstetten, near one of the sources of the Danube, and spending some considerable time with her.

Once on a fine evening, while they were promenading the city by starlight, they happened to be talking over their scheme just as they passed the high trees that bordered the public walk. The young married pair, though it was somewhat late, had called upon Bertalda to invite her to share their enjoyment; and all three now proceeded familiarly up and down beneath the dark-blue heaven, not seldom interrupted in their converse by the admiration which they could not

but bestow upon the magnificent fountain in the middle of the square, and upon the wonderful rush and shooting upward of its water. All was sweet and soothing to their minds; among the shadows of the trees stole in glimmerings of light from the adjacent houses; a low murmur as of children at play, and of other persons who were enjoying their walk, floated around them; so lonely were they, and sharing at the same time so much of social happiness, under a serene sky and amid the living world, that whatever had appeared difficult by day, now became smooth and easy of its own accord, and the three friends could no longer see the slightest cause for hesitation in regard to Bertalda's taking the journey.

At that instant, just as they were appointing the day of their departure, a tall man approached them from the middle of the square, bowed respectfully to the company, and spoke something in the young bride's ear. Though displeased with the interruption and its cause, she walked aside a few steps with the stranger, and both began to whisper, as it seemed, in a foreign tongue. Huldbrand thought he recognized the strange man of the forest; and he gazed upon him with a look so intense and immoveable, that he neither heard nor answered the astonished inquiries of Bertalda. All at once Undine clapped her hands with delight, and turned back from the stranger, laughing: he, frequently shaking his head, retired with a hasty step and discontented air, and descended into the fountain. Huldbrand now felt perfectly certain, that his conjecture was correct, but Bertalda asked:

"And what, my dear Undine, did the master of the *fountain wish to* say to you?"

The young wife secretly laughed within herself, and made answer: "The day after to-morrow, my dear child, when the anniversary of your name-day returns, you shall be informed." And this was all she could be prevailed upon to disclose. She merely asked Bertalda to dinner on the appointed day, and requested her to invite her foster-parents; and soon afterward they separated.

"Kuhleborn?" said Huldbrand to his lovely wife with an inward shudder, when they had taken leave of Bertalda, and were now going home through the darkening streets.

"Yes, it was he," answered Undine, "and he would have wearied me with stupid warnings and forebodings without end. But in the midst of his senseless trash, what was altogether the reverse of his intention, he delighted me with a most welcome piece of news. If you, my dear lord and husband, wish me to acquaint you with it now, you need only command me, and I will freely and from my heart tell you all without reserve. But would you confer upon your Undine a very, very peculiar pleasure, only wait till the day after to-morrow, and then you too shall have your share of the surprise."

The knight was quite willing to gratify his wife, in regard to what she had requested with so beautiful a spirit; and this spirit she discovered yet more, for while she was that night falling asleep, she murmured to herself with a smile: "How she will rejoice and be astonished at what her master of the fountain has told me,—the dear, happy Bertalda!"

CHAPTER XI.

Festival of Bertalda's Name-day.

The company were sitting at dinner; Bertalday, adorned with jewels and flowers without number, the presents of her foster-parents and friends, and resembling some goddess of Spring, sat beside Undine and Huldbrand at the head of the table. When the sumptuous repast was ended, and the dessert was placed before them, permission was given that the doors should be left open: this was in accordance with the good old custom in Germany, that the common people might enjoy the privilege of seeing the splendour and sharing the festivity of their superiors. Among these spectators the servants carried round cake and wine.

Huldbrand and Bertalda waited with secret impatience for the promised explanation, and never, except when they could not well help it, removed their eyes from Undine. But the beautiful woman still continued silent, and merely smiled to herself with secret and heartfelt satisfaction. All who were made acquainted with the promise she had given, could perceive that she was every moment on the point of revealing a secret, which she felt to be of an exciting nature; and yet, as children sometimes delay tasting their choicest dainties, she still withheld the communication, with a denial that made it the more desired. Bertalda and Huldbrand partook of the same delightful feeling, while in anxious hope they were expecting

the unknown disclosure, which they were to receive from the lips of their friend.

At this moment, several of the company pressed Undine to give them a song. This appeared to her to be quite a well-timed request, and immediately ordering her lute to be brought, she sung the following words:—

"Morning so bright,
Wild-flowers so gay,
Where high grass so dewy
Crowns the wavy lake's border.

"On the meadow's verdant bosom,
What glimmers there so white?
Have wreaths of snowy blossoms,
Soft-floating, fallen from heaven?

"Ah, see! a tender infant!
It plays with flowers, unwitting;
It strives to grasp morn's golden beams.—
O where, sweet stranger, where's your home?
Afar from unknown shores,
The waves have wafted hither
This helpless little one.

"Nay, clasp not, tender darling,
With tiny hand the flowers;
No hand returns the pressure,
The flowers are strange and mute.
They clothe themselves in beauty,
They breathe a rich perfume,
But cannot fold around you
A mother's loving arms;—
Far, far away, that mother's fond embrace.

"Life's early dawn just opening faint,
Your eye yet beaming Heaven's own smile,
So soon your first, best guardian's gone;—
Severe, poor child, your fate,—
All, all to you unknown.

"A noble duke has cross'd the mead,
And near you check'd his steed's career:
Wonder and pity touch his heart;
With knowledge high and manners pure
He rears you,—makes his castle home your own.

"How great, how infinite, your gain!
Of all the land you bloom the loveliest,
Yet, ah! that first, best blessing,
The bliss of parents' fondness,
You left on strands unknown."

Undine touched her lute with the low undertones of feeling, and paused with a melancholy smile; the eyes of Bertalda's ducal foster-parents were filled with tears.

"Ah yes, it was so,—such *was* the morning on which I found you, poor amiable orphan," cried the duke with deep emotion; "the beautiful singer is certainly right; still

'That first, best blessing,
The bliss of parents' fondness,'

it was beyond our power to give you."—

"But we must hear also, what happened to the poor parents," said Undine, as she struck the chords, and sung;

"Through her chambers roams the mother,
Searching, searching everywhere;
Seeks, and knows not what, with yearning,
Childless home still finding there.

"Childless home!—O, sound of anguish!
She alone the anguish knows,
There by day who led her dear one,
There who rock'd its night repose.

"Beechen-buds again are swelling,
Sunshine warms again the shore,
Ah, fond mother, cease your searching,
Comes the loved and lost no more.

"Then when airs of eve are fresh'ning,
Home the father wends his way,
While with smiles his woe he's veiling,
Gushing tears his heart betray.

"Well he knows, within his dwelling,
Still as death he'll find the gloom,
Only hear the mother moaning,—
No sweet babe to *smile* him home."

"O tell me, in the name of God tell me, Undine, where are my parents?" cried the weeping Bertalda. "You certainly know, you must have discovered them, you wonderful woman, for otherwise you would never have thus torn my heart. Can they be already here? May I believe it possible?" Her eye glanced rapidly over the brilliant company, and rested upon a lady of distinction, who was sitting next to her foster-father.

Then, with an inclination of her head, Undine beckoned toward the door, while her eyes overflowed with the sweetest emotion. "Where are the poor parents waiting?" she asked, and the old fisherman, diffident and hesitating, advanced with his wife from the crowd of spectators. Swift as the rush of hope within them, they threw a look of inquiry, now at Undine, and now at the beautiful lady, who was said *to be their daughter.*

"It is she! it is she there, before you!" exclaimed the restorer of their child, with the imperfect utterance of rapture, and both the aged parents embraced their recovered daughter, weeping aloud and praising God.

But, shocked and indignant, Bertalda tore herself from their arms. Such a discovery was too severe for her proud spirit to bear, especially at the moment when she had doubtless expected to see her former splendour increased, and when hope was picturing to her nothing less brilliant than a royal canopy and a crown. It seemed to her as if her rival had contrived all this, and with the special view to humble her before Huldbrand and the whole world. She reproached Undine, she abused the old people, and even such offensive words as "deceiver, bribed and perjured impostors," burst from her lips.

The aged wife of the fisherman then said to herself, but in a very low voice: "Ah, my God! what a worthless vixen of a woman she has grown! and yet I feel in my heart, that she is my child."

The old fisherman, however, had meanwhile folded his hands, and offered up a silent prayer, that she might *not* be his daughter.

Undine, faint and pale as death, turned from the parents to Bertalda, from Bertalda to the parents; she was suddenly cast down from all that heaven of happiness, of which she had been dreaming, and plunged into an agony of terror and disappointment, of which until now she had never formed even a dream

"Have you a soul? Can you really have a soul, Bertalda?" she cried again and again to her angry *friend, as if* with vehement effort she would rouse her *from a sudden* delirium or some distracting dream, *and restore her* to recollection.

But when Bertalda became every moment only more and more enraged, as the disappointed parents began to weep aloud, and the company, with much warmth of dispute, were espousing opposite sides, she discovered a prompt and admirable presence of mind: she begged for the liberty of speaking in this her husband's dining-hall, and so worthy of praise was her purpose, and so earnest were her expressions and tones, that all around her were in an instant hushed to silence. She then advanced to the upper end of the table, where, both humbled and haughty, Bertalda had seated herself, and, while every eye was fastened upon her, spoke in the following manner:

"My friends, I am grieved to see you appear so dissatisfied and disturbed. This entertainment of mine, which you are interrupting with your heated discussion, I had hoped would prove a satisfaction to you and myself. Ah, my God! I knew nothing of these your heartless maxims, these your unnatural ways of thinking, and never so long as I live, I fear, shall I become reconciled to them. The disclosure I have made, it seems, is unwelcome to you; it has produced all this excitement and confusion; but I am not to blame for such a result. Believe me, little as you may imagine this to be the case, it is wholly owing to yourselves. One word more, therefore, is all I have to add, but this is one that must be spoken: I have uttered nothing but truth. Of the certainty of the fact I give you the strongest assurance; no other proof can I or will I produce; but this I will affirm in the presence of God. The individual who gave me this information, was the very person who decoyed the *infant Bertalda into* the water, and who, after thus

taking her from her parents, placed her on the green grass of the meadow, where he knew the duke was to pass."

"She is an enchantress," cried Bertalda, "a witch, that has intercourse with evil spirits. She has even now confessed it herself."

"Never! I deny it," replied Undine, while a whole heaven of innocence and truth beamed from her eyes. "I am no witch; look upon me, see and acknowledge the injustice of her words."

"Then she utters both falsehood and folly," cried Bertalda, "and she is unable to prove that I am the child of these low people. My noble parents, I entreat you to take me from this company, and out of this city, beyond the breath of calumny and abuse. Nothing but detraction meets me here."

But the aged duke, a man of honourable feeling, remained unmoved by her excited state, and his lady remarked: "We must thoroughly examine the circumstances of this matter. God forbid, that we should move a step from this hall, before we do so."

Encouraged by this kind word, the aged wife of the fisherman drew near, made a low obeisance to the duchess, and said: "Exalted and pious lady, you have opened my heart. Permit me to tell you, that if this evil-disposed maiden is my daughter, she has a mark, like a violet, between her shoulders, and another of the same kind on the instep of her left foot. If she will only consent to go out of the hall with me——"

"I will not consent to uncover myself before the peasant woman," interrupted Bertalda, haughtily turning her back upon her.

"*But before* me you certainly will," replied the

duchess with solemnity. "You will follow me into that room, young woman, and the worthy old lady shall go with us."

The three disappeared, and the rest continued where they were, in the hush of almost unbreathing expectation. In a few minutes the females returned, Bertalda pale as death, and the duchess said: "Truth must be acknowledged as truth; I therefore declare, that our lady hostess has spoken with perfect correctness. Bertalda is the fisherman's daughter; no further proof is required; and this is all, of which on the present occasion you need to be informed."

The princely pair went out with their adopted daughter; the fisherman, in consequence of a sign from the duke, followed them with his wife. The other guests retired in silence, or but imperfectly suppressing their murmurs, while Undine, weeping as if her heart would break, sunk into the arms of Huldbrand

CHAPTER XII.

How they departed from the city.

The lord of Ringstetten would certainly have been more gratified, had the events of this day been different; but even such as they now were, he could by no means look upon them as unwelcome, since his fair wife had discovered so much natural feeling, kindness of spirit, and cordial affection.

"If I have given her a soul," he could not help saying to himself, "I have assuredly given her a better one than my own;" and now what chiefly occupied his mind, was to soothe and comfort his weeping wife, and even so early as the morrow to remove her from a place which, after this cross accident, could not fail to be distasteful to her. Yet it is certain, that the opinion of the public concerning her was not changed. As something extraordinary had long before been expected of her, the mysterious discovery of Bertalda's parentage had occasioned little or no surprise; and every one who became acquainted with the disclosure of Bertalda's story, and with the violence of her behaviour on that occasion, was only disgusted and set against her. Of this state of things, however, the knight and his lady were as yet ignorant; besides, whether the public condemned Bertalda or herself, the one view of the affair would have been as distressing to Undine as the other; *and thus they* came to the conclusion, that the wisest

course they could take, was to leave behind them the walls of the old city with all the speed in their power.

With the earliest beams of morning, a brilliant carriage, for Undine, drove up to the door of the inn; the horses of Huldbrand and his attendants stood near, stamping the pavement, impatient to proceed. The knight was leading his beautiful wife from the door, when a fish-girl came up and met them in the way.

"We have no occasion for your fish," said Huldbrand, accosting her, "we are this moment setting out on a journey."

Upon this the fish-girl began to weep bitterly, and then it was that the young couple first perceived it was Bertalda. They immediately returned with her to their apartment, where she informed them, that, owing to her unfeeling and violent conduct of the preceding day, the duke and duchess had been so displeased with her, as entirely to withdraw from her their protection, though not before giving her a generous portion. The fisherman, too, had received a handsome gratuity and had, the evening before, set out with his wife for his beloved peninsula.

"I would have gone with them," she pursued, "but the old fisherman, who is called my father," — — —

"He certainly is your father, Bertalda," said Undine, interrupting her. "Pray consider what I tell you: the stranger, whom you took for the master of the water-works, gave me all the particulars. He wished to dissuade me from taking you with me to Castle Ringstetten, and therefore disclosed to me the whole *mystery.*"

"Well then," continued Bertalda, "my father,—if it must needs be so,—my father said: 'I will not take you with me, until your mind and manners are changed. If you will leave your home here in the city, and venture to come to us alone through the ill-omened forest, that shall be a proof of your having some regard for us. But come not to me as a lady; come merely as a fish-girl.'—I am determined, therefore, to do just what he commanded me; for since I am abandoned by all the world, I will live and die in solitude, a poor fish-girl with parents equally poor. The forest, indeed, appears very terrible to me. Horrible spectres make it their haunt, and I am so timorous. But how can I help it?—I have only come here at this early hour, to beg the noble lady of Ringstetten to pardon my unbecoming behaviour of yesterday. Dear Madam, I have the fullest persuasion that you meant to do me a kindness, but you were not aware how severely you would wound and injure me; and this was the reason, that, in my agony and surprise, so many rash and frantic expressions burst from my lips. Forgive me, ah, forgive me! I am in truth so unhappy already. Do but consider what I was only yesterday morning, what I was even at the beginning of your yesterday's festival, and what I am at the present moment!"—

Her words now became inarticulate, lost in a passionate flow of tears, while Undine, bitterly weeping with her, fell upon her neck. So powerful was her emotion, that it was a long time before she could utter a word. But at length she said:

"Dearest Bertalda, do not despair; you shall still go with us to Ringstetten; all shall still remain just *as we lately* arranged it; only, in speaking to me, pray

continue to use the familiar and affectionate terms, that we have been wont to use, and do not pain me with the sound of 'madam,' and 'noble lady,' any more. Consider, we were changed for each other, when we were children; even then we were united by a like fate, and we will strengthen this union with such close affection, as no human power shall dissolve. Only first of all you must go with us to Ringstetten. As to the manner in which we shall share our sisterly enjoyments there, we will leave that to be talked over after we arrive."

Bertalda looked up to Huldbrand with timid inquiry. He pitied the fair girl in her affliction, took her hand, and begged her, with the greatest tenderness, to intrust herself to him and his wife.

"We will send a message to your parents," continued he, "giving them the reason why you have not come;" and he would have added much more about his worthy friends of the peninsula, when, perceiving that Bertalda shrunk in distress at the mention of them, he waived the subject. Then taking her under the arm, as they left the room, he lifted her first into the carriage, after her Undine, and was soon trotting blithely beside them; so persevering was he, too, in urging forward their driver, that in a short time they had left the limits of the city, and with these a crowd of painful recollections; and now the ladies experienced a satisfaction, more and more exquisite, as their carriage rolled on through the picturesque scenes, which their progress was continually presenting.

After a journey of some days they arrived on a fine evening at Castle Ringstetten. The young knight being *much engaged with* the overseers and menials of his

establishment, Undine and Bertalda were left alone. Eager for novelty, they took a walk upon the high rampart of the fortress, and were charmed with the delightful landscape, which fertile Suabia spread around them. While they were viewing the scene, a tall man drew near, who greeted them with respectful civility, and who seemed to Bertalda much to resemble the director of the city fountain. Still less was the resemblance to be mistaken, when Undine, indignant at his intrusion, waved him off with an air of menace; while he, shaking his head, retreated with rapid strides, as he had formerly done, then glided among the trees of a neighbouring grove, and disappeared.

"Do not be terrified, dear Bertalda," said Undine; "the odious master of the fountain shall do you no harm this time."—And then she related to her the particulars of her history, and who she was herself,—how Bertalda had been taken away from the people of the peninsula, and Undine substituted in her place. This relation, at first, filled the young woman with amazement and alarm; she imagined her friend must be seized with a sudden alienation of mind. But, from the consistency of her story, she became more and more convinced that all was true, it so well agreed with her former adventures, and still more from that inward feeling, with which truth never fails to make itself known to us. She could not but view it as an extraordinary circumstance, that she was herself now living, as it were, in the midst of one of those wild fictions of romance, which she had formerly heard related for mere *amusement*. She gazed upon Undine with awe, but *could not* avoid feeling a shudder, which seemed to

separate her from her friend: and she could not but be extremely astonished when the knight, at their evening repast, showed himself so kind and affectionate toward a being, who appeared, after the discoveries just made, more like a phantom of the spirit-world than one of the human race.

CHAPTER XIII.

How they lived at Castle Ringstetten.

The writer of this history, because it touches his own heart, and because he wishes it may equally move the hearts of others, begs you, dear reader, to grant him a single favour. Excuse him if he now passes over a considerable period of time, and gives you only a general account of its events. He is well aware, that, perfectly conforming to the rules of art, and step by step, he might delineate the process, by which Huldbrand's warmth of attachment for Undine began to decline, and to be transferred to Bertalda; how Bertalda gradually became more and more attached, and met the young man's glance with a glow of love; how they both seemed rather to fear the poor wife, as a being of another species, than to sympathize with her; how Undine wept, and her tears produced remorse in the knight's heart, yet without awaking his former tenderness, so that his treatment of her would discover occasional impulses of kindness, but a cold shuddering would soon drive him from her side, and he would hasten to the society of Bertalda, as a more congenial being of his own race;—all this, the writer is aware, he could describe with the minute touches of truth, and perhaps this is the course that he ought to pursue. But his heart would feel the task to be too melancholy; for, having suffered calamities of this nature, he is im-

pressed with terror even at the remembrance of their shadows.

You have probably experienced a similar feeling yourself my dear reader, for such is the inevitable allotment of mortal man. Happy are you, if you have rather endured than inflicted this misery, since, in matters of this kind, more blessed is he that receives than he that gives. For when *you* have been the suffering party, and such remembrances come over the mind, only a soft pensiveness steals into the soul, and perhaps a tender tear trickles down your cheek, while you regret the fading of the flowers, in which you once took a delight so exquisite. But of this no more; we would not linger over the evil, and pierce our hearts with pangs a thousand-fold repeated, but just briefly hint the course of events, as I said before.

Poor Undine was extremely distressed, and the other two were far from being happy; Bertalda in particular, whenever she was in the slightest degree opposed in her wishes, attributed the cause to the jealousy and oppression of the injured wife. In consequence of this suspicious temper, she was daily in the habit of discovering a haughty and imperious demeanour, to which Undine submitted in sad and painful self-denial; and, such was the blind delusion of Huldbrand, he usually supported the impropriety in the most decisive terms.

What disturbed the inmates of the castle still more, was the endless variety of wonderful apparitions, which assailed Huldbrand and Bertalda in the vaulted passages of the building, and of which nothing had ever been heard before within the memory of man. The tall white man, in whom Huldbrand but too well recognized *Undine's uncle* Kuhleborn, and Bertalda the

mysterious or spectral master of the water-works, often passed before them with threatening aspect and gestures; more especially, however, before Bertalda, so that she had already several times fainted and fallen through terror, and had in consequence frequently thought of quitting the castle. But partly owing to her excessive fondness for Huldbrand, as well as to a reliance on what she termed her innocence, since no declaration of mutual attachment had ever been distinctly made, and partly also, because she knew not whither to direct her steps, she lingered where she was.

The old fisherman, on receiving the message from the lord of Ringstetten, that Bertalda was a welcome guest in his family, returned answer in some lines almost too illegible to be deciphered, but still the best his advanced life and long disuse of writing permitted him to form.

"I have now become," he wrote, "a poor old widower, for my beloved and faithful wife is dead. But bereaved and disconsolate as I am, sitting solitary in my cottage, I prefer Bertalda's remaining where she is, to her living with me. One thing is all I have to ask, which is this, that she do nothing to hurt my dear Undine, or to make her unhappy. Should she be thus guilty, she must expect, what she will certainly have, the visitation of a father's curse."

The last words of this letter, awful as they were, Bertalda flung to the winds; but the permission to remain from home, which her father had granted her, she remembered and clung to as a peculiar indulgence, just as we are all wont to do in like circumstances.

One day, a few moments after Huldbrand had ridden

out, Undine called together the domestics of the family, and ordered them to bring a large stone, and carefully to cover with it a magnificent fountain, that was situated in the middle of the castle court. The servants ventured to hint as an objection, that it would oblige them to bring their water from the valley below, which was at an inconvenient distance. Undine smiled with an expression of melancholy.

"I am sorry, dear children," replied she, "to increase your labour; I should prefer to bring up the water vessels myself, but this fountain must indeed be closed. Believe me when I say, that it must be done, and that by doing it we only avoid a greater evil,—one that may well be called a calamity."

The domestics were all delighted to gratify their gentle mistress; and making no further inquiry, they seized the enormous stone. While they were raising it in their hands, and were now on the point of adjusting it over the fountain, Bertalda came running to the place, and cried with an air of command, that they must stop: that the water she used, so improving to her complexion, she was wont to have brought from this fountain, and that she would by no means allow it to be closed.

This time, however, Undine, while she showed her usual gentleness and more than her usual resolution, remained firm to her purpose: she said it belonged to her, as mistress of the castle, to direct the regulations of the household according to her own best judgment, and that she was accountable in this to no one but her lord and husband.

"See, O *pray see!*" exclaimed the dissatisfied and *indignant Bertalda*, "how the beautiful water is

curling and curving, winding and waving there, as if disturbed at being shut out from the bright sunshine, and from the cheerful view of the human countenance, for whose mirror it was created."

In truth, the water of the fountain was agitated, and foaming, and hissing in a surprising manner; it seemed as if there were something within, possessing life and will, that was struggling to free itself from confinement. But Undine only the more earnestly urged on the accomplishment of her commands. This earnestness was scarcely required. The servants of the castle were as happy in obeying their sweet-tempered lady, as in opposing the haughty spirit of Bertalda; and with whatever rudeness the latter might even scold and threaten, still the stone was in a few minutes lying firm over the opening of the fountain. Undine leaned thoughtfully over it, and wrote with her beautiful fingers on the flat surface. She must, however, have had something very acrid and corrosive in her hand; for when she retired, and the domestics went up to examine the stone, they discovered various strange characters upon it, which none of them had seen there before.

When the knight returned home toward evening, Bertalda received him with tears and complaints of Undine's treatment of her. He threw a severe look at his poor wife, and she cast down her eyes in evident distress. Still she spoke with great firmness:

"My lord and husband, you never reprove even a bond-slave, before you hear his defence,—how much less then your wedded wife!"

"*Speak,* what moved you to this singular conduct?" *said the knight* with a gloomy countenance.

"I could wish to tell you, when we are entirely alone," said Undine with a sigh.

"You can tell me equally well in the presence of Bertalda," he replied.

"Yes, if you command me," said Undine, "but do not command me. Pray, pray, do not!"

She looked so humble, affectionate, and obedient, that the heart of the knight was touched and softened, as if it felt the influence of a ray from better times. He kindly took her arm within his, and led her to his apartment, where she spoke as follows:

"You already know something, my beloved lord, of Kuhleborn, my evil-disposed uncle, and have often felt displeasure at meeting him in the passages of this castle. Several times has he terrified Bertalda even to swooning. He does this because he possesses no soul, being a mere elementary mirror of the outward world, while of the world within he can give no reflection. Then, too, he sometimes observes, that you are displeased with me, that in my childish weakness I weep at this, and that Bertalda, it may be, is laughing at the same moment. Hence it is, that he conceives every sort of wrong and unkindness to exist, and in various ways mixes with our circle unbidden. What do I gain by reproving him? by showing displeasure, and sending him away? He does not believe a word I say. His poor imperfect nature affords him no conception, that the pains and pleasures of love have so mysterious a resemblance, and are so intimately connected, that no power on earth is able to separate them. Even in the midst of tears, a smile is dawning on the cheek, and smiles call forth tears from their secret recesses."

She looked up at Huldbrand, smiling and weeping

and he again felt within his heart all the magic of his former affection. She perceived it, and pressed him more tenderly to her, while amid tears of joy she went on thus:

"When the disturber of our peace would not be dismissed with words, I was obliged to shut the door upon him; and the only entrance by which he has access to us, is that fountain. His connection with the other water-spirits, here in this region, is cut off by the valleys that border upon us, and his kingdom first commences further off on the Danube, in whose tributary streams some of his good friends have their abode. For this reason I caused the stone to be placed over the opening of the fountain, and inscribed characters upon it, which baffle all the efforts of my suspicious and passionate uncle, so that he now has no power of intruding either upon you, or me, or Bertalda. Human beings, it is true, notwithstanding the characters I have inscribed there, are able to raise the stone without any extraordinary trouble; there is nothing to prevent them. If therefore this be your resolve, remove it according to Bertalda's desire, but she assuredly knows not what she asks. The rude Kuhleborn looks with peculiar ill-will upon her; and should much come to pass that he has imperfectly predicted to me, and which is quite likely to happen, without your meaning any evil,—I fear, I fear, my dear husband, that you yourself would be exposed to peril."

Huldbrand felt the generosity of his amiable wife in the depth of his heart, since she had been so active in confining her formidable defender, and even at the *very moment she* was suffering in consequence of the *reproaches of Bertalda.* Influenced by this feeling,

he pressed her in his arms with the tenderest affection, and said with emotion:

"The stone shall remain unmoved, all remains and ever shall remain, just as you choose to have it, my dear, very dear Undine!"

At these long withheld expressions of tenderness, she returned his caresses with lowly delight, and ending what she had to say, observed: "My dearest husband, since you are so very kind and indulgent to-day, may I venture to ask a favour of you? Pray observe, it is with you as with Summer. Even amid its highest splendour, Summer puts on the flaming and thundering crown of glorious tempests, in which it strongly resembles a king and god on earth. You too are sometimes terrible in your rebukes; your eyes flash lightning, while thunder resounds in your voice; and although this may be quite becoming to you, I in my folly cannot but sometimes weep at it. But never, I entreat you discover such violence toward me on a river, or even when we are near a piece of water. For if you should, pray consider what the consequences will be: my relations would acquire a right to exercise authority over me. They would tear me from you in their fury with inexorable force, because they would conceive that one of their race was injured, and I should be compelled, as long as I lived, to dwell below in the crystal palaces, and never dare ascend to you again; or should *they* send me up to you, O God! that would be infinitely more deplorable still. No, no, my beloved husband, let it not come to that, if your poor Undine is dear to you."

He *solemnly* promised to do as she desired, and, *infinitely happy* and full of affection, the married pair

returned from the apartment. At this very moment, Bertalda came with some work-people, whom she had meanwhile ordered to attend her, and said with a fretful air, which she had assumed of late:—

"Well, now the secret consultation is at an end, it is to be hoped the stone may be permitted to come down. Go out workmen, and execute your business."

The knight, however, highly resenting her impertinence, said in brief and very decisive terms: "The stone remains where it is;" he reproved Bertalda also for the vehement and undisciplined spirit that she had discovered toward his wife. Whereupon the workmen, smiling with secret satisfaction, withdrew; while Bertalda, pale with rage, hurried to her room.

When the hour of supper came, no Bertalda appeared: they waited for her in vain. They sent for her; but the domestic found her apartments empty, and brought back with him only a sealed billet, addressed to the knight. He opened it in alarm, and read these words:

"I feel with shame, that I am only the daughter of a poor fisherman. That I for one moment forgot this, I will make expiation in the miserable hut of my parents. Farewell,—with your beautiful wife!"

Undine was troubled at heart. With passionate emphasis she entreated Huldbrand to hasten after their friend, who had flown, and bring her back with him. Alas! she had no occasion to urge him. His passion for Bertalda again burst forth with vehemence. He hurried round the castle, inquiring whether any one *had seen* which way the fair fugitive had gone. He *could gain no information*, and was already in the court *upon his horse*, determining to take at a venture the

road by which he had conducted Bertalda to the castle; when there appeared a shield-boy, who assured him, that he had met the lady on the path to the Black Valley. Swift as the impulse of passion, the knight sprung through the gate in the direction pointed out, without hearing Undine's voice of agony, as she cried after him from the window:

"To the Black Valley? O, not there! Huldbrand, not there! or if you will go, for God's sake take me with you!"

But when she perceived that all her calling was of no avail, she ordered her white palfrey to be instantly saddled, and followed the knight without permitting a single servant to accompany her.

CHAPTER XIV.

How Bertalda returned with the Knight.

The Black Valley lies secluded far among the mountains. What its present name may be, I am unable to say. At the time of which I am speaking, the country-people gave it this appellation from the deep obscurity produced by the shadows of lofty trees, more especially by a crowded growth of firs, that covered this region of moor-land. Even the brook, which gushed out among the crags, and wound its way down a ravine into the valley, assumed there the same dark hue, and exhibited nothing of that cheerful aspect, which streams are wont to wear, that have the blue sky immediately over them.

It was now the dusk of evening, and the view between the heights had become extremely wild and gloomy. The knight, in great anxiety, skirted the border of the brook; he was at one time fearful that by delay he should allow the fugitive to advance too far before him; and then again, in his too eager rapidity, he was afraid he might somewhere overlook and pass by her, should she be desirous of concealing herself from his search. He had in the mean time penetrated pretty far into the valley, and felt assured of soon overtaking the maiden, provided he were pursuing the right track. The fear, indeed, that he might not as yet have gained this track, made his heart beat

with more and more of anxiety. In the stormy night, which was now impending, and which always hovered more fearfully over this valley, where would the delicate Bertalda shelter herself, should he fail to find her? At last, while these thoughts were darting across his mind, he saw something white glimmer through the branches on the ascent of the mountain. He felt quite certain, that the object he discerned was Bertalda's robe, and he directed his course toward it. But his horse refused to go forward; he reared with a fury so uncontrollable, and his master was so unwilling to lose a moment, that (especially as he saw the thickets were altogether impassable on horseback) he dismounted, and, having fastened his snorting steed to an elm, worked his way with caution through the matted underwood. The branches, moistened by the cold drops of the evening dew, keenly smote his forehead and cheeks; thunder muttered remotely on the further side of the mountains; and every thing put on so strange and mystic an appearance, that he began to feel a dread of the white figure, which now lay only a short distance from him upon the ground. Still he could see with perfect clearness, that it was a female, either asleep or in a swoon, and dressed in long white garments, such as Bertalda had worn the past day. Approaching quite near to her, he made a rustling with the branches and a ringing with his sword,—but she did not move.

"Bertalda!" he cried; at first low, then louder and louder; still she heard him not. At last, when he uttered the dear name with an energy yet more powerful, a hollow echo, from the mountain-summits around the valley, returned the deadened sound, "Bertalda!" *Still the sleeper continued* insensible. He stooped low,

with a view to examine her countenance, but the duskiness of the valley and the obscurity of twilight would not allow him to distinguish her features. While with agonizing uncertainty he was bending near to her, a flash of lightning suddenly shot across the valley. By this stream of light, he saw a frightfully distorted visage close to his own, and a hoarse voice struck him with startling abruptness:

"You enamoured shepherd, give me a kiss:" Huldbrand sprang upon his feet with a cry of horror, and the hideous figure rose with him.

"Home!" it cried with a deep murmur; "the fiends are abroad. Home! or I have you!" And it stretched toward him its long white arms.

"Malicious Kuhleborn," exclaimed the knight with restored energy, "Kuhleborn you are, what business have you here —what's your will, you goblin!—There, take your kiss!"—and in fury he flashed his sword at the form. But the form vanished like vapour; and a rush of water giving the knight as good a drenching as wetting him to the skin could make it, left him in no doubt with what foe he had been engaged.

"He wishes to frighten me back from my pursuit of Bertalda," said he to himself; "he imagines, that I shall be terrified at his senseless enchantments, and resign the poor distressed girl to his power, so that he can wreak his vengeance upon her at will. But, impotent spirit of the flood! he shall find himself mistaken. What the heart of man can do, when it exerts the full force of its will, the strong energy of its noblest powers, of this the feeble enchanter has no *comprehension*."

He felt the truth of his words, and that, in thus

giving utterance to his thoughts, he had inspired his heart with fresh courage. Fortune too appeared to be in league with him; for, before reaching his fastened steed, he distinctly heard the voice of Bertalda, where she was now weeping and now moaning not far before him, amid the roar of the thunder and the tempest, which every moment increased. He flew swiftly toward the sound, and found the trembling maiden, just as she was attempting to climb the steep, and striving to the extent of her power, to escape from the dreadful darkness of this valley. He stepped before her, while he spoke in tones of the most soothing tenderness; and bold and proud as her resolution had so lately been, she now felt nothing but the liveliest gratitude, that the man, whom she so passionately loved, would rescue her from this frightful solitude, and extending to her his arms of welcome, would still cast a brightness over her existence in their re-union at the castle. She followed almost unresisting, but so spent with fatigue, that the knight was glad to accompany and support her to his horse, which he now hastily unfastened from the elm: his intention was to lift the fair wanderer upon him, and then to lead him carefully by the reins through the uncertain shades of this lowland tract.

But, owing to the mad appearance of Kuhleborn, the horse had become altogether unmanageable. Rearing and wildly snorting as he was, the knight must have used uncommon effort to mount the beast himself; to place the trembling Bertalda upon him was impossible. They were compelled, therefore, to return home on foot. While with one hand the knight drew the steed after him by the bridle, he supported the *tottering Bertalda with the other.* She exerted all the

strength she had remaining, in order to escape from this vale of terrors as speedily as possible; but weariness weighed her down like lead, and a universal trembling seized her limbs, partly in consequence of what she had suffered from the extreme harassment with which Kuhleborn had pursued her, and in part from her continual fear, arising from the roar of the tempest and thunder amid the mountain forest.

At last she slid from the arm of her conductor, and, sinking upon the moss, she said; "I can no more; let me lie here, my noble lord. I suffer the punishment due to my folly, and nothing can save me now; I must perish here through faintness and dismay."

"Never, my dear friend, will I leave you," cried Huldbrand, vainly trying to restrain the furious animal he was leading; for the horse was all in a foam, and began to chafe more ungovernably than before, till the knight was glad merely to keep him at such a distance from the exhausted maiden, as would secure her from still greater fear and alarm. But hardly had he withdrawn five steps with the frantic steed, when she began to call after him in the most sorrowful accents, fearful that he would actually leave her in this horrible wilderness. He was wholly at a loss what course to take. Gladly would he have given the enraged beast his liberty,—he would have let him rush away amid the night and exhaust his fury,—had he not shuddered at the thought, that in this narrow defile his iron-shod hoofs might come trampling and thundering over the very spot where Bertalda lay.

During this extreme peril and embarrassment, a *feeling of* delight, not to be expressed, shot through *him, when* he heard the rumbling wheels of a wagon,

as it came slowly descending the stony slope behind them. He called out for help: answer was returned in the deep voice of a man, bidding them have patience, but promising assistance; and two horses of greyish white soon after shone through the bushes, and near them their driver in the white frock of a carter; and next appeared a great sheet of white linen, with which the goods which he seemed to be conveying, were covered. The whitish greys, in obedience to a shout from their master, stood still. He came up to the knight, and aided him in checking the fury of the foaming charger.

"I know well enough," said he, "what is the matter with the brute. The first time I travelled this way, my horses were just as wilful and headstrong as yours. The reason is, there is a water-spirit haunts this valley, and a wicked wight they say he is, who takes delight in mischief and witcheries of this sort. But I have learned a charm; and if you let me whisper it in your horse's ear, he will stand just as quiet as my silver greys there."

"Try your luck, then, and help us as quick as possible!" said the impatient knight.

Upon this the wagoner drew down the head of the rearing courser close to his own, and spoke some half dozen words in his ear. The animal instantly stood as still and subdued as usual, excepting his quick panting and smoking sweat, produced by his recent violence.

Huldbrand had little time to inquire by what means this had been effected. He agreed with the man that he should take Bertalda in his wagon, where, as he said, a quantity of soft cotton was stowed, and he might in this *way convey her to* Castle Ringstetten: the knight

could accompany them on horseback. But the horse appeared to be too much exhausted to carry his master so far. Seeing this, the man advised him to mount the wagon with Bertalda. The horse could be tied to it behind.

"It is down hill," said he, "and the load for my greys will, therefore, be light."

The knight accepted his offer, and entered the wagon with Bertalda; the horse followed quietly after, while the wagoner, sturdy and attentive, walked beside them.

Amid the silence and deeper obscurity of the night, the tempest became more and more remote and hushed; in the comfortable feeling of their security and their commodious passage, a confidential conversation arose between Huldbrand and Bertalda. He reproved her in the most gentle and affectionate terms for her resentful flight; she excused herself with humility and emotion, and from every tone of her voice it was clear —just as a lamp guides a lover amid the secrecy of night to his waiting mistress,—that she still cherished her former affection for him. The knight felt the force of what she said far too powerfully to regard the import of her *words*, and his replies related merely to the impression he received,—to the feeling and not the confession of love.

In the midst of this interchange of murmured feelings, the wagoner suddenly shouted with a startling voice: "Up, my greys, up with your feet! Hey, my hearts, now together, show your spirit! Do it handsomely! remember who you are!"

The knight bent over the side of the wagon, and *saw that* the horses had stepped into the midst of a

foaming stream, and were, indeed, almost swimming, while the wheels of the wagon were rushing round and flashing like mill-wheels, and the teamster had got on before to avoid the swell of the flood.

"What sort of a road is this? It leads into the middle of the stream!" cried Huldbrand to his guide.

"Not at all, Sir," returned he with a laugh, "it is just the contrary. The stream is running in the middle of our road. Only look about you, and see how all is overflowed."

The whole valley, in fact, was covered and in commotion; as the waves, suddenly raised and visibly rising, swept over it.

"It is Kuhleborn, that devil of a water-spirit, who wishes to drown us!" exclaimed the knight. "Have you no charm of protection against him, companion?"

"Charm! to be sure I have one," answered the wagoner, "but I cannot and must not make use of it before you know who I am."

"Is this a time for riddles?" cried the knight. "The flood is every moment rising higher and higher, and what does it concern *me* to know who *you* are?"

"But mayhap it does concern you though," said the guide, "for I am KUHLEBORN!"

Thus speaking, he thrust his face into the wagon, and laughed with every feature distorted; but the wagon remained a wagon no longer, the greyish white horses were horses no longer; all was transformed to foam,—all sunk into the waves that rushed and hissed around them,—while the wagoner himself, rising in the form of a gigantic surge, dragged the vainly struggling courser under the waters, then rose again huge as a liquid *tower, burst over* the heads of the floating pair,

and was on the point of burying them irrecoverably beneath it.

At that instant the soft voice of Undine was heard through the uproar, the moon emerged from the clouds, and by its light Undine became visible on a rising ground of the valley. She rebuked, she threatened the flood below her; the menacing and tower-like billow vanished muttering and murmuring; the waters gently flowed away under the beams of the moon; while Undine, like a hovering white dove, came sweeping down from the knoll, seized the knight and Bertalda, and supported them to a green spot of turf on the hillock, where, by her earnest efforts, she soon restored them, and dispelled their terrors. She then assisted Bertalda to mount the white palfrey, on which she herself had been borne to the valley, and thus all three returned homeward to Castle Ringstetten.

CHAPTER XV.

Passage down the Danube to Vienna.

After this last adventure, they lived at the castle undisturbed and in peaceful enjoyment. The knight was more and more impressed with the heavenly goodness of his wife, which she had so beautifully discovered by her instant pursuit, and by the rescue she had effected in the Black Valley, where the power of Kuhleborn again commenced. Undine herself felt that peace and security, which the mind never fails to experience, so long as it has the consciousness of pursuing the path of rectitude; and she had this additional comfort, that, in the newly awakened love and regard of her husband, Hope and Joy were rising upon her with their myriad beams of promise.

Bertalda, on the other hand, showed herself grateful, humble, and timid, without taking to herself any merit for so doing. Whenever Huldbrand or Undine began to explain to her their reason for covering the fountain, or their adventures in the Black Valley, she would earnestly entreat them to spare her the recital, since the fountain had occasioned her too much shame, and the Black Valley too much terror, to be made topics of conversation. With respect to these, therefore, she learnt nothing further from either of them; and why was it necessary that she should be informed? Peace and Happiness had evidently taken up their abode at

Castle Ringstetten. They enjoyed their present blessings in perfect security; and in relation to the future, they now imagined it impossible, that life could produce any thing but pleasant flowers and fruits.

In this grateful union of friendship and affection, winter came and passed away; and spring, with its foliage of tender green and its heaven of softest blue, succeeded to gladden the hearts of the inmates of the castle. The season was in harmony with their minds, and their minds imparted their own hue and tone to the season. What wonder, then, that its storks and swallows inspired them also with a disposition to travel! On a bright morning, while they were taking a walk down to one of the sources of the Danube, Huldbrand spoke of the magnificence of this noble stream, how it continued swelling as it flowed through countries enriched by its waters, with what splendour Vienna rose and sparkled on its banks, and how it grew lovelier and more imposing almost the whole of its progress.

"It must be a glorious privilege, once in our life, to trace its course down to Vienna!" Bertalda exclaimed with warmth; but, immediately resuming the humble and modest demeanour she had recently shown, she paused and blushed in silence.

This incident, slight as it may appear, was extremely touching to Undine; and with the liveliest wish to gratify her friend, she said; "And who or what shall prevent our taking this little voyage?"

Bertalda leapt up with delight, and the two females the same moment began the work of imagination, *painting* this enchanting trip on the Danube in the *most brilliant* colours. Huldbrand, too, agreed to the

project with pleasure; only he once whispered with something of alarm in Undine's ear:

"But, at that distance, Kuhleborn becomes possessed of his power again?"

"Let him come, let him come," she answered with a laugh; "I shall be there, and he dares do none of his mischief in my presence."

Thus was the last impediment removed; they prepared for the expedition, and soon set out upon it with lively spirits and the brightest hopes.

But be not surprised, O man, if events continually happen very different from what you expect. That malign power, which lies in ambush for our destruction, delights to lull its chosen victim asleep with sweet songs and golden delusions; while, on the other hand, the messenger of Heaven, sent to rescue us from peril, often thunders at our door with the violence of alarm and terror.

During the first days of their passage down the Danube, they were unusually gratified. The further they advanced upon the waters of this proud river, the views became more and more picturesque and attractive. But here, amid scenes otherwise most delicious, and from which they had promised themselves the purest delight, here again the stubborn Kuhleborn, dropping all disguise, began to show his power of annoying them. He had few other means of doing this, indeed, than mere tricks and illusions, for Undine often rebuked the swelling waves or the contrary winds, and then the insolence of the enemy was instantly humbled and subdued; but his attacks were renewed, and Undine's admonition became again *necessary: so that* the pleasure of this little water-

party was completely destroyed. The oarsmen, too, were continually whispering to one another in dismay, and eyeing their three superiors with distrust; while even the servants began more and more to form dismal surmises, and to watch their master and mistress with looks of suspicion.

Huldbrand often said to himself, in the silence of his soul: "This comes to pass, when like marries not like,—when a man forms an unnatural union with a female of the sea." Still, excusing himself, as we are most of us so fond of doing, he frequently pursued a train of thought like this; "I did not in fact know that she *was* a maid of the sea. It is my misfortune, that all my steps are haunted and disturbed by the wild humours of her kindred, but it is not my crime."

Making reflections like these, he felt himself in some measure strengthened; but, on the other hand, he only the more entertained a feeling of ill-humour against Undine, almost amounting to malevolence. He cast upon her glances of fretfulness and ill-nature, and the unhappy wife but too well understood their meaning.

One day, grieved by this unkindness, as well as exhausted by her continual exertions to foil the artifices of Kuhleborn, while rocked and soothed by the gentle motion of the bark, she toward evening fell into a deep slumber. But hardly had she closed her eyes, when every person in the boat, in whatever direction he might look on the water, saw the head of a man, beyond imagination frightful: each head rose out of the waves, not like that of a person swimming, but quite *perpendicular*, as if firmly fastened to the watery mirror, and still moving on with the progress of the bark.

Every one wished to show to his companion what terrified himself, and each perceived the same expression of horror on the face of the other, only his hand and eye were directed to a different quarter, as if to a point where the monster, half laughing and half threatening, rose opposite to himself.

When, however, they wished to make one another understand the sight, and all cried out, "Look there!" "No, there!" the frightful heads all became visible to each, and the whole river around the boat swarmed with faces of the most horrible expression. All raised a scream of terror at the sight, and Undine started from sleep. The moment she opened her eyes upon the mad group, the deformed visages disappeared. But Huldbrand was made furious by the frequent recurrence of these hideous visions. He would have burst out in wild imprecations, had not Undine, with the most submissive air, and in the gentlest tone of supplication, thus entreated him:

"For God's sake, my husband, do not express displeasure against me here,—we are on the water."

The knight was silent and sat down, absorbed in a profound reverie. Undine whispered in his ear: "Would it not be better, my love, to give up this foolish voyage, and return to Castle Ringstetten in peace?"

But Huldbrand murmured in a voice expressive of the embittered state of his mind: "So I must become a prisoner in my own castle? and not be allowed to breathe a moment but while the fountain is covered? Would to Heaven that our frantic union ——"

At these fatal words, Undine pressed her fair hand *on his lips with the* most touching tenderness. He

said no more, but, assuming an air of composure, pondered on all that Undine had lately warned him to avoid.

Bertalda, meanwhile, had given herself up to a crowd of wild and wandering thoughts. Of Undine's origin she knew a good deal, but not the whole, and the terrible Kuhleborn had, more especially, remained to her an awful and yet in every view an impenetrable mystery: never, indeed, had she once heard his name. Musing upon this series of wonders, she unclasped, without being fully conscious of what she was doing, a gold necklace, which Huldbrand, on one of the preceding days of their passage, had bought for her of a travelling trader; and she was now letting it swing in sport just over the surface of the stream, while, in her dreamy mood, she enjoyed the bright reflection it threw on the water, so clear beneath the glow of evening. That instant, a huge hand flashed suddenly up from the Danube, seized the necklace in its grasp, and vanished with it beneath the flood. Bertalda shrieked aloud, and a laugh of mockery and contempt came pealing up from the depth of the river.

The knight could now restrain his wrath no longer. He started up, gazed fiercely upon the deep, poured forth a volley of reproaches, heaped curses upon all who interfered with his connection or troubled his life, and dared them all, water-spirits or mermaids, to come within the sweep of his sword.

Bertalda, meantime, wept for the loss of the ornament so very dear to her heart, and her tears were to Huldbrand as oil poured upon the flame of his fury: *while Undine* held her hand over the side of the boat, *dipping* it in the waves, softly murmuring to herself,

and only at times interrupting her strange mysterious whisper, when she addressed her husband in a voice of entreaty:

"Do not reprove me here, my dear Huldbrand; throw whatever blame upon others you will, but me, show me no unkindness here. Surely you know the reason!" And, in truth, though his tongue was trembling with excess of passion, he with strong effort kept himself from articulating a single word against her.

She then brought up in her wet hand, which she had been holding under the waves, a coral necklace of such exquisite beauty, such sparkliug brilliancy, as dazzled the eyes of all who beheld it. "Take this," said she, holding it out with affectionate sweetness to Bertalda; "I have ordered it to be brought, to make some amends for your loss, and do not be troubled any more, poor child."

But the knight rushed between them, and, snatching the beautiful ornament out of Undine's hand, hurled it back into the flood, and in a flame of rage exclaimed: "So then, you have a connexion with them for ever? In the name of all witches and enchanters, go and remain among them with your presents, you sorceress, and leave us human beings in peace!"

But poor Undine, with a look of mute amazement and eyes streaming with tears, gazed on him, her hand still stretched out, just as it was when she had so kindly offered her brilliant gift to Bertalda. She then began to weep with more and more of impassioned anguish, like a tender child, all innocence and very bitterly *grieved.* At last she said, in a tone of voice *the most faint* and affecting:

"Alas, dear friend, all is over now,—farewell! They shall do you no harm; only remain true, that I may keep them from you. But I, alas, must go away, I must go away, even in this early dawn of youth and bliss. O woe, woe, what have you done! O woe, woe!"

And she vanished over the side of the boat.—Whether she plunged into the stream, or whether, like water melting into water, she flowed away with it, they knew not, her disappearance so much resembled both united, and neither by itself. But she was gone, gliding on with the Danube, instantly and completely; only little waves were yet whispering and sobbing around the boat, and they seemed almost distinctly to say: "O woe, woe! Ah, remain true! O woe!"

But Huldbrand, in a passion of burning tears, threw himself upon the deck of the bark, and a deep swoon soon wrapped the wretched man in a blessed forgetfulness of misery.

CHAPTER XVI.

What further happened to Huldbrand.

The brief period of our mourning,—ought we to view it as a misfortune, or as a blessing? I mean that deep mourning of the heart, which gushes up from the very well-springs of our being; that mourning, which becomes so perfectly one with the lost object of our affection, that this even ceases to be a lost thing to the sorrowing heart; and which desires to make the whole life a holy office dedicated to the image of the departed, until we too pass that boundary which separates it from our view.

Some men there are, indeed, who have this profound tenderness of spirit, and who thus consecrate their affections to the memory of the departed; but still their mourning softens into an emotion of gentle melancholy, having none of the intenseness of the first agony of separation. Other and foreign images intervene, and impress themselves upon the mind; we learn at last the transitory nature of every thing earthly, even from that of our affliction; and I cannot therefore but view it as a misfortune, that the period of our mourning is so brief.

The lord of Ringstetten learned the truth of this by experience; but whether he derived any advantage from the knowledge, we shall discover in the sequel of this *history*. *At first* he could do nothing but weep—*weep as bitterly as* the poor amiable Undine had wept,

when he snatched out of her hand that brilliant ornament, with which she so beautifully wished to make amends for Bertalda's loss. And then he stretched his hand out as she had done, and wept again like her with renewed violence. He cherished a secret hope, that even the springs of life would at last become exhausted by weeping; and when we have been severely afflicted, has not a similar thought passed through the minds of many of us with a painful pleasure? Bertalda wept with him, and they lived together a long while at Castle Ringstetten in undisturbed quiet, honouring the memory of Undine, and having almost wholly forgotten their former attachment.

Owing to this tender remembrance of Huldbrand, and to encourage him in conduct so exemplary, the good Undine, about this time, often visited his dreams; she soothed him with soft and affectionate caresses, and then went away again, weeping in silence, so that when he awoke, he sometimes knew not how his cheeks came to be so wet,—whether it was caused by *her* tears, or only by his own.

But as time advanced these visions became less frequent, and the severity of the knight's sorrow was softened; still he might never while he lived, it may be, have entertained any other wish than thus to think of Undine in silence, and to speak of her in conversation, had not the old fisherman arrived unexpectedly at the castle, and earnestly insisted on Bertalda's returning with him as his child. He had received information of Undine's disappearance, and he was not *willing* to allow Bertalda to continue longer at the *castle with* the unmarried lord. "For," said he "*whether my* daughter loves me or not, is at present

what I care not to know; but her good name is at stake, and where that commands or forbids, not a word more need be said."

This resolution of the old fisherman, and the fearful solitude, that on Bertalda's departure, threatened to oppress the knight in every hall and passage of the deserted castle, brought a circumstance into distinct consciousness, which, owing to his sorrow for Undine, had of late been slumbering and completely forgotten, —I mean his attachment to the fair Bertalda, and this he made known to her father.

The fisherman had many objections to make to the proposed marriage. The old man had loved Undine with exceeding tenderness, and it was a doubtful conclusion to his mind, that the mere disappearance of his beloved child could be properly viewed as her death. But were it even granted, that her corse were lying stiff and cold at the bottom of the Danube, or swept away by the current to the ocean, still Bertalda would not be guiltless in her death, and it would be wrong for her to step into the place of the poor banished wife. The fisherman, however, had felt a strong regard also for the knight; this, and the entreaties of his daughter, who had become much more gentle and respectful, as well as her tears for Undine, all exerted their influence; and he seems to have been forced at last to give up his reluctance, for he remained at the castle without objection, and a courier was sent off express to father Heilmann, who in former and happier days had united Undine and Huldbrand, requesting him to come and perform the ceremony at the knight's second marriage.

But the holy man had hardly read through the letter from the lord of Ringstetten ere he set out upon the

journey, and made much greater dispatch on his way to the castle, than the messenger from there had made in reaching him. Whenever his breath failed him in his rapid progress, or his old limbs ached with fatigue, he would say to himself:

"Perhaps I may still be in season to prevent the commission of a crime; then sink not, weak and withered body, before I arrive at the end of my journey." And with renewed vigour he pressed forward, hurrying on without rest or repose, until, late one evening, he entered the embowered court-yard of Castle Ringstetten.

The betrothed pair were sitting arm in arm under the trees, and the aged fisherman in a thoughtful mood sat near them. The moment they saw father Heilmann, they rose with a spring of joy, and pressed round him with looks, tones, and expressions of cordial welcome. But he, in the fewest words possible, urged the bridegroom to accompany him into the castle; and when Huldbrand stood mute with surprise, and delayed complying with his earnest request, the pious priest said to him:

"Why do I then defer speaking, my lord of Ringstetten, until I can address you in private? There is no occasion for the delay of a moment. What I have to say as much concerns Bertalda and the fisherman, as yourself; and what we cannot avoid hearing at some time, it is best to hear as soon as possible. Are you then so very *certain*, knight Huldbrand, that your first wife is actually dead? It hardly appears so to me. I will say nothing, indeed, of the mysterious situation in which she may be now existing; in truth, I know no*thing of it* with certainty. But that she was a most *devoted* and faithful wife, so much is beyond all dis-

pute. And for fourteen nights past she has appeared to me in a dream standing at my bed-side, wringing her tender hands in anguish, and imploring me with deep sighs: 'Ah, prevent him, dear father! I am still living! Ah! save his life! Ah! save his soul!'

"What this vision of the night could mean I was at first unable to divine; then came your messenger, and I have now hastened hither, not to unite, but, as I hope, to separate, what ought not to be joined together. Leave her, Huldbrand! Leave him, Bertalda! He still belongs to another; and do you not see on his pale cheek the traces of that grief, which the disappearance of his wife has produced there? That is not the look of a bridegroom, and the spirit breathes the presage on my soul: 'If you do not leave him you will never, never be happy!'"

The three felt in their inmost hearts that father Heilmann spoke the truth; but still they affected not to believe him, or they strove rather to resist their conviction. Even the old fisherman had become so infatuated, that he conceived the marriage to be now indispensable, as they had so often, during the time he had been with them, mutually agreed to the arrangement. They all, therefore, with a determined and gloomy eagerness, struggled againt the representations and warnings of the holy man, until, shaking his head and oppressed with sorrow, he finally quitted the castle, not choosing to accept their offered shelter even for a single night, or, indeed, so much as to taste a morsel of the refreshment they brought him. Huldbrand persuaded himself, however, that the priest was a mere visionary or fanatic, and sent at day-break to a monk of the nearest monastery, who, without scruple, promised to perform the ceremony in a few days.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Knight's Dream.

It was at the earliest moment of dawn, when night begins faintly to brighten into morning twilight, that Huldbrand was lying on his couch, half waking and half sleeping. Whenever he attempted to compose himself to sleep, he was seized with an undefined terror, that made him shrink back from the enjoyment, as if his slumber were crowded with spectres. But whenever he made an effort to rouse himself, the wings of a swan seemed to be waving around him, and soothing him with the music of their motion, and thus in a soft delusion of the senses he sunk back into his state of imperfect repose.

At last, however, he must have fallen perfectly asleep; for, while the sound of the swan's-wings was murmuring around him, he seemed to be lifted by their regular strokes, and to be wafted far away over land and sea, and still their music swelled on his ear most sweetly. "The music of the swan! the song of the swan!" he could not but repeat to himself every moment; "is it not a sure foreboding of death?" Probably, however, it had yet another meaning. All at once he seemed to be hovering over the Mediterranean Sea. A swan with her loud melody sung in his ear, that this *was* the Mediterranean Sea; and while *he was looking* down upon the waves, they became

transparent as crystal, so that he could see through them to the very bottom.

At this a thrill of delight shot through him, for he could see Undine, where she was sitting beneath the clear domes of crystal. It is true, she was weeping very bitterly, and such was the excess of her grief, that she bore only a faint resemblance to the bright and joyous being she had been, during those happy days they had lived together at Castle Ringstetten, both on their arrival and afterward, a short time before they set out upon their fatal passage down the Danbue. The knight could not avoid dwelling upon all this with deep emotion, but it did not appear that Undine was aware of his presence.

Kuhleborn had meanwhile approached her, and was about to reprove her for weeping, when she assumed the boldness of superiority, and looked upon him with an air so dignified and commanding, that he was well-nigh terrified and confounded by it.

"Although I too now dwell here beneath the waters," said she, "yet I have brought my soul with me; and therefore I may well be allowed to weep, little as you may conceive the meaning of such tears. They are even a blessed privilege, as every thing is such a privilege, to one inspired with the true soul."

He shook his head with disbelief of what she said, and, after musing a moment or two, replied: "And yet, niece, you are subject to our laws of the element, as a being of the same nature with ourselves; and, should *he* prove unfaithful to you and marry again, you are obliged to take away his life."

"He remains a widower to this very hour," replied Undine, "and he still loves me with the passion of a *sorrowful heart*."

"He is, however, a bridegroom withal," said Kuhleborn, with a chuckle of scorn; "and let only a few days wear away, and anon comes the priest with his nuptial blessing, and then you must go up and execute your share of the business, the death of the husband with two wives."

"I have not the power," returned Undine, with a smile. "Do you not remember? I have sealed up the fountain securely, not only against myself but all of the same race."

"Still, should he leave his castle," said Kuhleborn, "or should he once allow the fountain to be uncovered, what then? for doubtless he thinks there is no great murder in such trifles."

"For that very reason," said Undine, still smiling amid her tears, "for that very reason he is this moment hovering in spirit over the Mediterranean Sea, and dreaming of this voice of warning which our conversation affords him. It has been with a view to give him this warning, that I have been studious in disposing the whole vision."

That instant Kuhleborn, inflamed with rage, looked up at the knight, wrathfully threatened him, stamped upon the ground, and then, swift as the passion that possessed him, sprang up from beneath the waves. He seemed to swell in his fury to the size of a whale. Again the swans began to sing, to wave their wings, to fly; the knight seemed to be soaring away over mountains and streams, and at last to alight at Castle Ringstetten, where he awoke upon his couch.

Upon his couch he actually did awake, and his attendant, entering at the same moment, informed him, *that father Heil*mann was still lingering in the neigh-

bourhood; that he had, the evening before, met with him in the forest, where he was sheltering himself under a booth, which he had formed by interweaving the branches of trees, and covering them with moss and fine brush-wood; and that to the question; 'What he was doing there, since he had so firmly refused to perform the nuptial ceremony?' his answer was:

"There are yet other ceremonies to perform, beside those at the altar of marriage; and though I did not come to officiate at the wedding, I can still officiate at a very different solemnity. All things have their season, and for this we must wait. Besides, marrying and mourning are by no means so very far from each other, as every one, not wilfully blinded, must know full well."

In consequence of these words and of his dream, the knight made a variety of reflections, some wild and some not unmixed with alarm. But a man is apt to consider it very disagreeable to give over an affair which he has once settled in his mind as certain, and therefore all went on just according to the old arrangement.

CHAPTER XVIII.

How the Knight Huldbrand solemnized his marriage.

Should I relate to you the events of the marriage festival at Castle Ringstetten, it would seem as if you were viewing a crowded assemblage of bright and joyous things, but all overspread with a black mourning crape, through whose darkening veil the whole splendour appeared less to resemble pleasure, than a mockery of the nothingness of all earthly joys.

It was not because some spectral confusion disturbed the scene of festivity; for the castle, as we well know, had been secured against the mischief and menaces of water-spirits. But the knight, the fisherman, and all the guests, were unable to banish the feeling, that the chief personage of the feast was still wanting, and that this chief personage could be no other than the amiable Undine, so dear to them all.

Whenever a door was heard to open, all eyes were involuntarily turned in that direction; and if it was nothing but the steward with new dishes, or the cupbearer with a supply of wine of higher flavour than the last, they again looked down in sadness and disappointment; and the flashes of wit and merriment which had been passing at times from one to another, ceased, and were succeeded by tears of mournful remembrance.

The bride was the least thoughtful of the company, *and therefore* the most happy; but even she, occasion-

ally, found it difficult to realize the fact, that she was sitting at the head of the table, wearing a green garland and gold-embroidered garments, while Undine was lying a corse, stiff and cold, at the bottom of the Danube, or carried out by the current into the ocean. For, ever since her father had suggested something of this sort, his words were continually sounding in her ear; and this day, in particular, they would neither fade from her memory nor give over their intrusion.

Evening had scarcely arrived, when the company returned to their homes; not dismissed by the impatience of the bridegroom, as wedding parties are sometimes broken up, but constrained solely by painful associations, joyless melancholy, and forebodings of evil. Bertalda retired with her maidens, and the knight with his attendants, to undress; but these young bridemaids and bridemen, such was the gloomy tenor of this festival, made no attempt to amuse bride or bridegroom with the usual pleasantry and frolicsome good-humour of the occasion.

Bertalda wished to awake a livelier spirit: she ordered them to spread before her a brilliant set of jewels, a present from Huldbrand, together with rich apparel and veils, that she might select from among them the brightest and most beautiful for her dress in the morning. The attendants eagerly seized this opportunity of gratifying both their young mistress and themselves; and while, with many wishes and promises of happiness, they indulged their love of talking, and declared how charmed they were with all they saw, they failed not to extol the beauty of the new-married lady with their liveliest eloquence. They became *more and more* absorbed in this admiration and flat-

tery, until Bertalda at last, looking in a mirror, said with a sigh:

"Ah, but do you not see plainly how freckled I am growing? Look here on the side of my neck."

They looked at the place, and found the freckles, indeed, as their fair mistress had said; but they called them mere beauty-spots, the faintest touches of the sun, such as would only heighten the whiteness of her delicate complexion. Bertalda shook her head, and still viewed them as a blemish.

"And I could remove them," she said at last, sighing. "But the castle-fountain is covered, from which I formerly used to have that precious water, so purifying to the skin. O, had I this evening only a single flagon of it!"

"Is that all?" cried an alert waiting-maid, laughing, as she glided out of the apartment.

"She will not be so frantic," said Bertalda, in a voice of inquiry and agreeably surprised, "as to cause the stone-cover of the fountain to be taken off this very evening?" That instant they heard the tread of men already passing along the court-yard, and could see from the window where the damsel, so kindly officious, was leading them directly up to the fountain, and that they carried levers and other instruments on their shoulders.

"It is certainly my will," said Bertalda with a smile, "if it does not take them too long." And, charmed with the conviction, that the merest hint from her was now sufficient to accomplish, what had formerly been refused with a painful reproof, she looked down upon *their operations* in the bright moonlight of the castle *court.*

The men seized the enormous stone, as if they must exert all their strength in raising it; some one of their number indeed would occasionally sigh, when he recollected they were destroying the work of their former beloved mistress. Their labour, however, was much lighter than they had expected. It seemed as if some power, from within the fountain itself, aided them in raising the stone.

"It certainly appears," said the workmen to one another in astonishment, "as if the confined water were becoming a jet or spouting fountain." And the stone rose more and more, and, almost without the assistance of the work-people, rolled slowly away upon the pavement with a hollow sound. But an appearance, from the opening of the fountain, filled them with awe, as it rose like a white column of water: at first they imagined it to be a spouting fountain in good earnest, until they perceived the rising form to be a pale female, veiled in white. She wept bitterly, raised her hands above her head, and wrung them with anguish, as with slow and solemn step she moved toward the castle. The servants shrunk back, and fled from the fountain; while the bride, pale and motionless with horror, stood with her maidens at the window from which she had been viewing what passed without. When the figure had now come close beneath their room, it looked up to them and uttered the low moaning of misery, and Bertalda thought she recognized through the veil the pale features of Undine. But the mourning form passed on as sad, reluctant, and lingering, as if going to the place of execution. Bertalda screamed to her maids to call the knight; not one of them dared to stir from her place; and even the bride herself became

CHAPTER XIX.

How the Knight Huldbrand was Buried.

Father Heilmann had returned to the castle, as soon as the death of the lord of Ringstetten was made known in the neighbourhood; and he arrived at the very hour when the monk, who had married the unfortunate couple, was hurrying from the door, overcome with dismay and horror.

When father Heilmann was informed of this, he replied: "It is all well; and now come the duties of my office, in which I have no need of an assistant."

He then began to console the bride, now become a widow, small as was the advantage her worldly and light-minded spirit derived from his kindness.

The old fisherman, on the other hand, though severely afflicted, was far more resigned in regard to the fate of his son-in-law and the calamity of his daughter; and while Bertalda could not refrain from accusing Undine as a murderess and fiend-like enchantress, the old man calmly said: "The event, after all, could not have happened otherwise. I see nothing in it but the judgment of God; and no one, I am sure, could have his heart more pierced by the death of Huldbrand, than she who was obliged to accomplish his doom, the poor forsaken Undine!"

He then assisted in arranging the funeral solemnities, as suited the rank of the deceased. The knight was to be interred in a village church-yard, in whose

consecrated ground were the graves of his ancestors; a place which they, as well as himself, had endowed with rich privileges and gifts. His shield and helmet lay upon his coffin, ready to be lowered with it into the grave, for lord Huldbrand of Ringstetten had died the last of his race; the mourners began their sorrowful march, lifting the melancholy wail of their dirges amid the calm unclouded heaven; father Heilmann preceded the procession, bearing a lofty crucifix, while Bertalda followed in her misery, supported by her aged father.

While proceeding in this manner, they suddenly saw, in the midst of the dark-habited mourning females in the widow's train, a snow-white figure, closely veiled, and wringing its hands in the wild vehemence of sorrow. Those next to whom it moved, seized with a secret dread, started back or sideways; and owing to their movements, the others, next to whom the white stranger now came, were terrified still more, so as to produce almost a complete disarrangement of the funeral train. Some of the military escort were emboldened to address the figure, and attempt to remove it from the procession, but it seemed to vanish from under their hands, and yet was immediately seen advancing again, with slow and solemn step, among the followers of the body. At last, in consequence of the shrinking away of the attendants, it came close behind Bertalda. It now moved so slowly, that the widow was not aware of its presence, and it walked meekly on behind, neither suffering nor creating disturbance.

This continued until they came to the church-yard, where the procession formed a circle round the open

grave. Then it was that Bertalda perceived her unbidden companion, and prompted half by anger and half by terror, she commanded her to depart from the knight's place of final rest. But the veiled female, shaking her head with a gentle refusal, raised her hands toward Bertalda, in lowly supplication, by which she was greatly moved, and could not but remember with tears, how Undine had shown such sweetness of spirit on the Danube, when she held out to her the coral necklace.

Father Heilmann now motioned with his hand, and gave order for all to observe perfect stillness, that over the body, whose mound was well-nigh formed, they might breathe a prayer of silent devotion. Bertalda knelt without speaking; and all knelt, even the grave-diggers who had now finished their work. But when they rose from this breathing of the heart, the white stranger had disappeared. On the spot where she had kneeled, a little spring, of silver brightness, was gushing out from the green turf, and it kept swelling and flowing onward with a low murmur, till it almost encircled the mound of the knight's grave; it then continued its course, and emptied itself into a calm lake, which lay by the side of the consecrated ground. Even to this day, the inhabitants of the village point out the spring;—and they cannot but cherish the belief, that it is the poor deserted Undine, who in this manner still fondly encircles her beloved in her arms.

THE END.

H. G. Clarke & Co, Printers, 66, Old Bailey.

PSYCHE.

rs. Tighe are several pictures conceived
xy, while over the whole composition is
of purified passion.—*Rev. A. Dyce, B. A.*

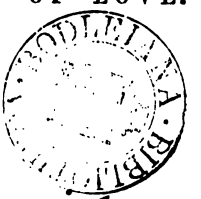
esign and accuracy of execution this much
al composition of the present day. While the
ntrymen shall beat at the sweetest sounds of
guage, conveying as nature dictates the feelings
asions, so long shall this tale of Psyche dwell on
id they shall think the angel still is speaking.—
iew.

s so exquisite an illustration of the purest and most
g feeling which is permitted to man to experience, that
fain recall this exquisite poem from the oblivion into
e fear it has fallen, and would recommend it to every
as affording through a charming, a delightful medium,
ral lessons best calculated to insure her happiness in that
in which alone her nature can be perfected,—in a happy
age.—*London Saturday Journal.*

PSYCHE,

OR

THE LEGEND OF LOVE.



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MEMOIR.

The accomplished authoress of the following poems is but little known to the general reader. We leave her poems to speak for themselves, assured that their numerous beauties will be duly appreciated by all persons of right feeling and correct taste. Of her personal history little is known; and while we regret, we feel that such regret is unavailing, that the materials for a life of one who could reason so justly and feel so well, are not more ample than we are doomed to find them.

Mrs. Tighe it appears from the scanty records that remain, was a native of the sister country, and was born in Ireland in the year 1773; her father was the Rev. William Blachford, who died a few months after her birth. Mary gave early indications of surpassing talents, and her beauty and accomplishments procured numerous suitors for her hand. Early in life she was united by marriage to Mr. Henry Tighe, a

gentleman of considerable property in the county of Wexford, but from causes not necessary to explain, the union proved in many respects an unhappy one, and the amiable authoress of the following work relieved her tedious hours by the production of some of the finest compositions which have appeared in this or any other language from a female pen. Psyche was published for private circulation during her life, and met with glowing admiration from a numerous circle of enraptured friends; after her death, it, with some other pieces, was given to the world in a posthumous publication.

To family afflictions Mrs. Tighe had to endure the pressure of personal infirmity. For six years she was deprived of the use of her limbs, and had to employ an amanuensis in order to commit her thoughts to paper. She bore her protracted sufferings with patient resignation to the Divine will, and finally resigned her soul with unshaken confidence in her Redeemer, at Woodstock, in Kilkenny, March 24, 1810, in the thirty-seventh year of her age.

Psyche,

OR

THE LEGEND OF LOVE.

—— Castos docet et pios amores.

MARTIAL.

PREFACE

TO THE EDITION OF 1805.

The author who dismisses to the public the darling object of his solitary cares, must be prepared to consider, with some degree of indifference, the various reception it may then meet. But from those who write only for the more interested eye of friendship, no such indifference can be expected. I may therefore be forgiven the egotism which makes me anxious to recommend to my readers the tale with which I present them, while I endeavour to excuse in it all other defects but that, which I fear cannot be excused, —the deficiency of genius.

In making choice of the beautiful ancient allegory of Love and the Soul, I had some fears lest my subject *might be con*demned by the frown of severer moralists:

however, I hope that if such have the condescension to read through a poem which they may perhaps think too long, they will yet do me the justice to allow, that I have only pictured innocent love, such love as the purest bosom might confess. "Les jeunes femmes, qui ne veulent point paroitre coquettes, ne doivent jamais parler de l'amour comme d'une chose ou elles puissent avoir part,"* says La Rochefoucault; but I believe it is only the false refinement of the most profligate court which could give birth to such a sentiment, and that love will always be found to have had the strongest influence where the morals have been the purest.

I much regret that I can have no hope of affording any pleasure to some, whose opinion I highly respect, whom I have heard profess themselves ever disgusted by the veiled form of allegory, and yet

> Are not the choicest fables of the poets
> Who were the fountains and first springs of wisdom
> Wrapt in perplexed allegories?

---

* No young woman, who does not wish to be accounted a *coquette*, should ever speak of love as what she can possibly be *interested* in.

But if I have not been able to resist the seductions of the mysterious fair, who perhaps never appears captivating except in the eyes of her own poet, I have however remembered that my verse cannot be worth much consideration, and have therefore endeavoured to let my meaning be perfectly obvious. The same reason has deterred me from using the obsolete words which are to be found in Spenser and his imitators.

Although I cannot give up the excellence of my subject, I am yet ready to own that the stanza which I have chosen has many disadvantages, and that it may, perhaps, be as tiresome to the reader as it was difficult to the author. The frequent recurrence of the same rhymes is by no means well adapted to the English language; and I know not whether I have a right to offer as an apology the restraint which I had imposed upon myself of strictly adhering to the stanza which my partiality for Spenser first inclined me to adopt.

The loves of Cupid and Psyche have long been a favourite subject for poetical allusion, and are well known as related by Apuleius: to him I am indebted for the outline of my tale in the two first cantos; but even there the model is not closely copied, and I have taken nothing from Moliere, La Fontaine, Du Moustier, or Marino. I have seen no imitations of Apuleius,

except by those authors; nor do I know that the story of Psyche has any other original.

I should willingly acknowledge with gratitude those authors who have, perhaps, supplied me with many expressions and ideas; but if I have subjected myself to the charge of plagiarism, it has been by adopting the words or images which floated upon my mind, without accurately examining, or being indeed able to distinguish, whether I owed them to my memory or my imagination.

> Si id est peccatum, peccatum imprudentia est
> Poetæ, non qui furtum facere studuerit.
>
> *Terentius.*

And when I confess that all I have is but the fruit of a much indulged taste for that particular style of reading, let me be excused if I do not investigate and acknowledge more strictly each separate obligation.

M. T.

SONNET

ADDRESSED TO MY MOTHER.

Oh, thou! whose tender smile most partially
  Hath ever blessed thy child: to thee belong
  The graces which adorn my first wild song,
If aught of grace it knows: nor thou deny
Thine ever prompt attention to supply.
  But let me lead thy willing ear along,
  Where virtuous love still bids the strain prolong
His innocent applause; since from thine eye
  The beams of love first charmed my infant breast,
And from thy lip Affection's soothing voice
  That eloquence of tenderness expressed,
Which still my grateful heart confessed divine:
Oh! ever may its accents sweet rejoice
The soul which loves to own whate'er it has is thine!

Chi pensa quanto un bel desio d'amore
Un spirto pellegrin tenga sublime;
Non vorria non averne acceso il core;
Chi gusta quanto dolce il creder sia
Solo esser caro a chi sola n'e cara,
Regna in un stato a cui null' altro e pria.

ARIOSTO, ELEG. XII.

Psyche.

ARGUMENT.

Proem—Psyche introduced—Her royal origin—Envy of Venus—Her instructions to Cupid—The island of Pleasure—The fountains of Joy and of Sorrow—The appearance of Love—Psyche asleep—Mutually wounded—Psyche reveals her Dream to her Mother—The Oracle consulted—Psyche abandoned on the Rock by its Decree—Carried by Zephyrs to the island of Pleasure—The palace of Love—Banquet of Love—Marriage of Cupid and Psyche—Psyche's daily solitude—Her request to her Lover—His reluctant Consent.

PSYCHE.

PROEM.

Let not the rugged brow the rhymes accuse,
Which speak of gentle knights and ladies fair,
Nor scorn the lighter labours of the muse,
Who yet, for cruel battles would not dare
The low-strung chords of her weak lyre prepare;
But loves to court repose in slumbery lay,
To tell of goodly bowers and gardens rare,
Of gentle blandishments and amorous play,
And all the lore of love, in courtly verse essay.

And ye whose gentle hearts in thraldom held
The power of mighty Love already own,
When you the pains and dangers have beheld,
Which erst your lord hath for his Psyche known,
For all your sorrows this may well atone,
That he you serve the same hath suffered;
And sure, your fond applause the tale will crown
In which your own distress is pictured,
And all that weary way which you yourselves must tread.

Most sweet would to my soul the hope appear,
That sorrow in my verse a charm might find,
To smooth the brow long bent with bitter cheer,
Some short distraction to the joyless mind
Which grief, with heavy chain, hath fast confined
To sad remembrance of its happier state;
For to myself I ask no boon more kind
Than power another's woes to mitigate,
And that soft soothing art which anguish can abate.

And thou, sweet sprite, whose sway doth far extend,
Smile on the mean historian of thy fame!
My heart in each distress and fear befriend,
Nor ever let it feel a fiercer flame
Than innocence may cherish free from blame,
And hope may nurse, and sympathy may own;
For, as thy rights I never would disclaim,
But true allegiance offered to thy throne,
So may I love but one, by one beloved alone.

That anxious torture may I never feel,
Which, doubtful, watches o'er a wandering heart.
Oh! who that bitter torment can reveal,
Or tell the pining anguish of that smart!
In those affections may I ne'er have part,
Which easily transferred can learn to rove:
No, dearest Cupid! when I feel thy dart,
For thy sweet Psyche's sake may no false love
The tenderness I prize lightly from me remove!

PSYCHE.

CANTO I.

Much wearied with her long and dreary way,
And now with toil and sorrow well nigh spent,
Of sad regret and wasting grief the prey,
Fair Psyche through untrodden forests went,
To lone shades uttering oft a vain lament.
And oft in hopeless silence sighing deep,
As she her fatal error did repent,
While dear remembrance bade her ever weep,
And her pale cheek in ceaseless showers of sorrow steep.

'Mid the thick covert of that woodland shade,
A flowery bank there lay undressed by art,
But of the mossy turf spontaneous made;
Here the young branches shot their arms athwart,
And wove the bower so thick in every part
That the fierce beams of Phœbus glancing strong
Could never through the leaves their fury dart;
But the sweet creeping shrubs that round it throng,
Their loving fragrance mix, and trail their flowers along.

And close beside a little fountain played,
Which through the trembling leaves all joyous shone,
And with the cheerful birds sweet music made,
Kissing the surface of each polished stone
As it flowed past: sure as her favourite throne
Tranquillity might well esteem the bower,
The fresh and cool retreat have called her own,
A pleasant shelter in the sultry hour,
A refuge from the blast, and angry tempest's power.

Wooed by the soothing silence of the scene,
Here Psyche stood, and looking round, lest aught
Which threatened danger near her might have been,
A while to rest her in that quiet spot
She laid her down, and piteously bethought
Herself on the sad changes of her fate,
Which in so short a space so much had wrought,
And now had raised her to such high estate,
And now had plunged her low in sorrow desolate.

Oh! how refreshing seemed the breathing wind
To her faint limbs! and while her snowy hands
From her fair brow her golden hair unbind,
And of her zone unloose the silken bands,
More passing bright unveiled her beauty stands;
For faultless was her form as beauty's queen,
And every winning grace that Love demands,
With mild attempered dignity was seen
Play o'er each lovely limb, and deck her angel mien.

Though solitary now, dismayed, forlorn,
Without attendant through the forest rude,
The peerless maid, of royal lineage born,
By many a royal youth had oft been wooed;
Low at her feet full many a prince had sued,
And homage paid unto her beauty rare;
But all their blandishments her heart withstood;
And well might mortal suitor sure despair,
Since mortal charms were none which might with hers compare.

Yet nought of insolence or haughty pride
Found ever in her gentle breast a place;
Though men her wondrous beauty deified,
And rashly deeming such celestial grace
Could never spring from any earthly race,
Lo! all forsaking Cytherea's shrine,
Her sacred altars now no more embrace,
But to fair Psyche pay those rites divine,
Which, Goddess! are thy due, and should be only thine.

But envy of her beauty's growing fame
Poisoned her sisters' hearts with secret gall,
And oft with seeming piety they blame
The worship which they justly impious call;
And oft, lest evil should their sire befal,
Besought him to forbid the erring crowd
Which hourly thronged around the regal hall,
With incense, gifts, and invocations loud,
To her whose guiltless breast ne'er felt elation proud.

For she was timid as the wintry flower,
That, whiter than the snow it blooms among,
Droops its fair head submissive to the power
Of every angry blast which sweeps along,
Sparing the lovely trembler, while the strong
Majestic tenants of the leafless wood
It levels low. But, ah! the pitying song
Must tell how, than the tempest's self more rude,
Fierce wrath and cruel hate their suppliant prey pursued.

Indignant quitting her deserted fanes,
Now Cytherea sought her favourite isle,
And there from every eye her secret pains
'Mid her thick myrtle bowers concealed a while;
Practised no more the glance, or witching smile,
But nursed the pang she never felt before,
Of mortified disdain; then to beguile
The hours which mortal flattery soothed no more,
She various plans revolved her influence to restore.

She called her son with unaccustomed voice;
Not with those thrilling accents of delight
Which bade so oft enchanted Love rejoice,
Soft as the breezes of a summer's night:
Now choked with rage its change could Love affright;
As all to sudden discontent a prey,
Shunning the cheerful day's enlivening light,
She felt the angry power's malignant sway,
And bade her favourite boy her vengeful will obey.

Bathed in those tears which vanquished human hearts,
"Oh, son beloved!" the suppliant goddess cried,
"If e'er thy too indulgent mother's arts
Subdued for thee the potent deities
Who rule my native deep, or haunt the skies;
Or if to me the grateful praise be due,
That to thy sceptre bow the great and wise,
Now let thy fierce revenge my foe pursue,
And let my rival scorned her vain presumption rue.

"For what to me avails my former boast
That, fairer than the wife of Jove confest,
I gained the prize thus basely to be lost?
With me the world's devotion to contest
Behold a mortal dares; though on my breast
Still vainly brilliant shines the magic zone.
Yet, yet I reign: by you my wrongs redrest,
The world with humbled Psyche soon shall own
That Venus, beauty's queen, shall be adored alone.

"Deep let her drink of that dark, bitter spring,
Which flows so near thy bright and crystal tide;
Deep let her heart thy sharpest arrow sting,
Its tempered barb in that black poison dyed.
Let her, for whom contending princes sighed,
Feel all the fury of thy fiercest flame
For some base wretch to foul disgrace allied,
Forgetful of her birth and her fair fame,
Her honours all defiled, and sacrificed to shame."

Then, with sweet pressure of her rosy lip,
A kiss she gave bathed in ambrosial dew;
The thrilling joy he would for ever sip,
And his moist eyes in ecstasy imbrue.
But she whose soul still angry cares pursue,
Snatched from the soft caress her glowing charms;
Her vengeful will she then enforced anew,
As she in haste dismissed him from her arms,
The cruel draught to seek of anguish and alarms.

'Mid the blue waves by circling seas embraced
A chosen spot of fairest land was seen;
For there with favouring hand had Nature placed
All that could lovely make the varied scene:
Eternal Spring there spread her mantle green;
There high surrounding hills deep-wooded rose
O'er placid lakes; while marble rocks between
The fragrant shrubs their pointed heads disclose,
And balmy breathes each gale which o'er the island blows.

Pleasure had called the fertile lawns her own,
And thickly strewed them with her choicest flowers;
Amid the quiet glade her golden throne
Bright shone with lustre through o'erarching bowers:
There her fair train, the ever-downy Hours,
Sport on light wing with the young Joys entwined;
While hope delighted from her full lap showers
Blossoms, whose fragrance can the ravished mind
Inebriate with dreams of rapture unconfined.

And in the grassy centre of the isle,
Where the thick verdure spreads a damper shade,
Amid their native rocks concealed a while,
Then o'er the plains in devious streams displayed,
Two gushing fountains rise; and thence conveyed,
Their waters through the woods and vallies play,
Visit each green recess and secret glade,
With still unmingled, still meandering way,
Nor widely wandering far, can each from other stray.

But of strange contrast are their virtues found,
And oft the lady of that isle has tried
In rocky dens and caverns under ground,
The black deformed stream in vain to hide;
Bursting all bounds her labours it defied;
Yet many a flowery sod its course conceals
Through plains where deep its silent waters glide,
Till secret ruin all corroding steals,
And every treacherous arch the hideous gulph reveals.

Forbidding every kindly prosperous growth,
Where'er it ran, a channel bleak it wore;
The gaping banks receded, as though loth
To touch the poison which disgraced their shore:
There deadly anguish pours unmixed his store
Of all the ills which sting the human breast,
The hopeless tears which past delights deplore,
Heart-gnawing jealousy which knows no rest.
And self-upbraiding shame, by stern remorse oppress.

Oh, how unlike the pure transparent stream,
Which near it bubbles o'er its golden sands
The impeding stones with pleasant music seem
Its progress to detain from other lands;
And all its banks, inwreathed with flowery bands,
Ambrosial fragrance shed in grateful dew:
There young Desire enchanted ever stands,
Breathing delight and fragrance ever new,
And bathed in constant joys of fond affection true.

But not to mortals is it e'er allowed
To drink unmingled of that current bright;
Scarce can they taste the pleasurable flood,
Defiled by angry Fortune's envious spite;
Who from the cup of amorous delight
Dashes the sparkling draught of brilliant joy,
Till, with dull sorrow's stream despoiled quite,
No more it cheers the soul nor charms the eye,
But 'mid the poisoned bowl distrust and anguish lie.

Here Cupid tempers his unerring darts,
And in the fount of bliss delights to play;
Here mingles balmy sighs and pleasing smarts,
And here the honied draught will oft allay
With that black poison's all polluting sway,
For wretched man. Hither, as Venus willed,
For Psyche's punishment he bent his way:
From either stream his amber vase he filled,
For her were meant the drops which grief alone
distilled.

His quiver, sparkling bright with gems and gold,
From his fair plumed shoulder graceful hung,
And from its top in brilliant chords enrolled
Each little vase resplendently was slung:
Still as he flew, around him sportive clung
His frolic train of winged Zephyrs light,
Wafting the fragrance which his tresses flung:
While odours dropped from every ringlet bright,
And from his blue eyes beamed ineffable delight.

Wrapt in a cloud unseen by mortal eye,
He sought the chamber of the royal maid;
There, lulled by careless soft security,
Of the impending mischief nought afraid,
Upon her purple couch was Psyche laid,
Her radient eyes a downy slumber sealed;
In light transparent veil alone arrayed,
Her bosom's opening charms were half revealed,
And scarce the lucid folds her polished limbs concealed.

A placid smile plays o'er each roseate lip,
Sweet severed lips! while thus your pearls disclose,
That slumbering thus unconscious she may sip
The cruel presage of her future woes!
Lightly, as fall the dews upon the rose,
Upon the coral gates of that sweet cell
The fatal drops he pours; nor yet he knows,
Nor, though a God, can he presaging tell
How he himself shall mourn the ills of that sad spell!

Nor yet content, he from his quiver drew,
Sharpened with skill divine, a shining dart:
No need had he for bow, since thus too true
His hand might wound her all-exposed heart;
Yet her fair side he touched with gentlest art,
And half relenting on her beauties gazed;
Just then awaking with a sudden start
Her opening eye in humid lustre blazed,
Unseen he still remained, enchanted and amazed.

The dart which in his hand now trembling stood,
As o'er the couch he bent with ravished eye,
Drew with its daring point celestial blood
From his smooth neck's unblemished ivory:
Heedless of this, but with a pitying sigh
The evil done now anxious to repair,
He shed in haste the balmy drops of joy
O'er all the silky ringlets of her hair;
Then stretched his plumes divine, and breathed celestial air.

Unhappy Psyche! soon the latent wound
The fading roses of her cheek confess,
Her eyes' bright beams, in swimming sorrows drowned,
Sparkle no more with life and happiness
Her parents' fond exulting heart to bless;
She shuns adoring crowds, and seeks to hide
The pining sorrows which her soul oppress,
Till to her mother's tears no more denied,
The secret grief she owns, for which she lingering sighed.

A dream of mingled terror and delight
Still heavy hangs upon her troubled soul,
An angry form still swims before her sight,
And still the vengeful thunders seem to roll;
Still crushed to earth she feels the stern control
Of Venus unrelenting, unappeased:
The dream returns, she feels the fancied dole;
Once more the furies on her heart have seized,
But still she views the youth who all her sufferings eased.

Of wonderous beauty did the vision seem,
And in the freshest prime of youthful years:
Such at the close of her distressful dream
A graceful champion to her eyes appears;
Her loved deliverer from her foes and fears
She seems in grateful transport still to press;
Still his soft voice sounds in her ravished ears;
Dissolved in fondest tears of tenderness
His form she oft invokes her waking eyes to bless.

Nor was it quite a dream, for as she woke,
Ere heavenly mists concealed him from her eye,
One sudden transitory view she took
Of love's most radiant bright divinity;
From the fair image never can she fly,
As still consumed with vain desire she pines;
While her fond parents heave the anxious sigh,
And to avert her fate seek holy shrines
The threatened ills to learn by augurics and signs.

And now, the royal sacrifice prepared,
The milk-white bull they to the altar lead,
Whose youth the galling yoke as yet had spared,
Now destined by the sacred knife to bleed:
When lo! with sudden spring his horns he freed,
And head-long rushed amid the frighted throng:
While from the smoke-veiled shrine such sounds proceed
As well might strike with awe the soul most strong;
And thus divinely spoke the heaven-inspired tongue.

"On nuptial couch, in nuptial vest arrayed,
On a tall rock's high summit Psyche place:
Let all depart, and leave the fated maid
Who never must a mortal Hymen grace:
A winged monster of no earthly race
Thence soon shall bear his trembling bride away;
His power extends o'er all the bounds of space,
And Jove himself has owned his dreaded sway,
Whose flaming breath sheds fire, whom earth and heaven obey."

With terror, anguish, and astonishment
The oracle her wretched father hears;
Now from his brow the regal honours rent,
And now in frantic sorrow wild appears,
Nor threatened plagues, nor punishment he fears,
Refusing long the sentence to obey,
Till Psyche, trembling with submissive tears,
Bids them the sacrifice no more delay,
Prepare the funeral couch, and leave the destined prey.

Pleased by the ambiguous doom the Fates promulge,
The angry Goddess and enamoured Boy
Alike content their various hopes indulge;
He, still exploring with an anxious eye
The future prospect of uncertain joy,
Plans how the tender object of his care
He may protect from threatened misery;
Ah, sanguine Love! so oft deceived, forbear
With flattering tints to paint illusive hope so fair.

But now what lamentations rend the skies!
In amaracine wreaths the virgin choir
With Io Hymen mingle funeral cries:
Lost in the sorrows of the Lydian lyre
The breathing flutes' melodious notes expire;
In sad procession pass the mournful throng,
Extinguishing with tears the torches' fire,
While the mute victim weeping crowds among,
By unknown fears oppressed, moves silently along.

But on such scenes of terror and dismay
The mournful Muse delights not long to dwell;
She quits well pleased the melancholy lay,
Nor vainly seeks the parents' woes to tell:
But what to wondering Psyche then befel
When thus abandoned, let her rather say,
Who shuddering looks to see some monster fell
Approach the desert rock to seize his prey,
With cruel fangs devour, or tear her thence away.

When lo! a gentle breeze began to rise,
Breathed by obedient Zephyrs round the maid,
Fanning her bosom with its softest sighs
A while among her fluttering robes it strayed,
And boldly sportive latent charms displayed:
And then, as Cupid willed, with tenderest care
From the tall rock, where weeping she was laid,
With gliding motion through the yielding air
To Pleasure's blooming isle their lovely charge they bear.

On the green bosom of the turf reclined,
They lightly now the astonished virgin lay,
To placid rest they sooth her troubled mind;
Around her still with watchful care they stay,
Around her still in quiet whispers play;
Till lulling slumbers bid her eyelids close,
Veiling with silky fringe each brilliant ray.
While soft tranquillity divinely flows
O'er all her soul serene, in visions of repose.

Refreshed she rose, and all enchanted gazed
On the rare beauties of the pleasant scene.
Conspicuous far a lofty palace blazed
Upon a sloping bank of softest green;
A fairer edifice was never seen;
The high-ranged columns own no mortal hand,
But seem a temple meet for Beauty's queen.
Like polished snow the marble pillars stand
In grace-attempered majesty sublimely grand.

Gently ascending from a silvery flood,
Above the palace rose the shaded hill,
The lofty eminence was crowned with wood,
And the rich lawns, adorned by Nature's skill,
The passing breezes with their odours fill;
Here ever-blooming groves of orange glow,
And here all flowers which from their leaves distil
Ambrosial dew in sweet succession blow,
And trees of matchless size a fragrant shade bestow.

The sun looks glorious 'mid a sky serene,
And bids bright lustre sparkle o'er the tide;
The clear blue ocean at a distance seen
Bounds the gay landscape on the western side,
While closing round it with majestic pride,
The lofty rocks 'mid citron groves arise;
"Sure some divinity must here reside,"
As tranced in some bright vision, Psyche cries,
And scarce believes the bliss, or trusts her charmed eyes.

When, lo! a voice divinely sweet she hears,
From unseen lips proceeds the heavenly sound;
"Psyche, approach, dismiss thy timid fears,
At length his bride thy longing spouse has found,
And bids for thee immortal joys abound;
For thee the palace rose at his command,
For thee his love a bridal banquet crowned;
He bids attendant nymphs around thee stand
Prompt every wish to serve, a fond obedient band."

Increasing wonder filled her ravished soul,
For now the pompous portals opened wide,
There, pausing oft, with timid foot she stole
Through halls high doomed, enriched with sculptured pride,
While gay saloons appeared on either side,
In splendid vista opening to her sight;
And all with precious gems so beautified,
And furnished with such exquisite delight,
That scarce the beams of heaven emit such lustre bright.

The amethyst was there of violet hue,
And there the topaz shed its golden ray,
The chrysoberyl, and the sapphire blue
As the clear azure of a sunny day,
Or the mild eyes where amorous glances play;
The snow-white jasper, and the opal's flame,
The blushing ruby, and the agate grey,
And there the gem which bears his luckless name
Whose death by Phœbus mourned ensured him deathless fame.

There the green emerald, there cornelians glow,
And rich carbuncles pour eternal light,
With all that India and Peru can shew,
Or Labrador can give so flaming bright
To the charmed mariner's half-dazzled sight:
The coral-paved baths with diamonds blaze:
And all that can the female heart delight
Of fair attire, the last recess displays,
And all that Luxury can ask, her eye surveys.

Now through the hall melodious music stole,
And self-prepared the splendid banquet stands,
Self-poured the nectar sparkles in the bowl,
The lute and viol touched by unseen hands
Aid the soft voices of the choral bands;
O'er the full board a brighter lustre beams
Than Persia's monarch at his feast commands:
For sweet refreshment all inviting seems
To taste celestial food, and pure ambrosial streams.

But when meek Eve hung out her dewy star,
And gently veiled with gradual hand the sky,
Lo! the bright folding doors retiring far,
Display to Psyche's captivated eye
All that voluptuous ease could e'er supply
To sooth the spirits in serene repose:
Beneath the velvet's purple canopy
Divinely formed a downy couch arose,
While alabaster lamps a milky light disclose.

Once more she hears the hymeneal strain;
Far other voices now attune the lay;
The swelling sounds approach, a while remain,
And then retiring faint dissolved away:
The expiring lamps emit a feebler ray,
And soon in fragrant death extinguished lie:
Then virgin terrors Psyche's soul dismay,
When through the obscuring gloom she nought can spy.
But softly rustling sounds declare some Being nigh.

Oh, you for whom I write! whose hearts can melt
At the soft thrilling voice whose power you prove,
You know what charm, unutterably felt,
Attends the unexpected voice of Love:
Above the lyre, the lute's soft notes above,
With sweet enchantment to the soul it steals,
And bears it to Elysium's happy grove;
You best can tell the rapture Psyche feels
When Love's ambrosial lip the vows of Hymen seals.

"'Tis he, 'tis my deliverer! deep impress
Upon my heart those sounds I well recal,"
The blushing maid exclaimed, and on his breast
A tear of trembling ecstasy let fall.
But, ere the breezes of the morning call
Aurora from her purple, humid bed,
Psyche in vain explores the vacant hall,
Her tender lover from her arms is fled,
While sleep his downy wings had o'er her eyelids spread.

Again the band invisible attend,
And female voices soothe the mournful bride;
Light hands to braid her hair assistance lend,
By some she sees the glowing bracelet tied,
Others officious hover at her side,
And each bright jem for her acceptance bring,
While some, the balmy air diffusing wide,
Fan softer perfumes from each odorous wing
Than the fresh bosom sheds of earliest, sweetest *spring*.

With songs divine her anxious soul they cheer,
And woo her footsteps to delicious bowers,
They bid the fruit more exquisite appear
Which at her feet its bright profusion showers:
For her they cull unknown, celestial flowers;
The gilded car they bid her fearless guide,
Which at her wish self-moved with wondrous powers
The rapid bird's velocity defied,
While round the blooming isle it rolled with circuit wide.

Again they spread the feast, they strike the lyre,
But to her frequent questions nought reply,
Her lips in vain her lover's name require,
Or wherefore thus concealed he shuns her eye,
But when reluctant twilight veils the sky,
And each pale lamp successively expires;
Again she trembling hears the voice of joy,
Her spouse a tender confidence inspires,
But with a fond embrace ere dawn again retires.

To charm the languid hours of solitude
He oft invites her to the Muse's lore,
For none have vainly e'er the Muse pursued,
And those whom she delights, regret no more
The social, joyous hours, while rapt they soar
To worlds unknown, and live in fancy's dream:
Oh, Muse divine! thee only I implore,
Shed on my soul thy sweet inspiring beams,
And pleasure's gayest scene insipid folly seems!

Silence and solitude the Muses love,
And whom they charm they can alone suffice;
Nor ever tedious hour their votaries prove:
This solace now the lonely Psyche tries,
Or, while her hand the curious needle plies,
She learns from lips unseen celestial strains;
Responsive now with their soft voice she vies,
Or bids her plaintive harp express the pains
Which absence sore inflicts where Love all potent reigns.

But melancholy poisons all her joys,
And secret sorrows all her hopes depress,
Consuming languor every bliss destroys,
And sad she droops repining, comfortless.
Her tender lover well the cause can guess,
And sees too plain inevitable fate
Pursue her to the bowers of happiness.
"Oh, Psyche! most beloved, ere yet too late,
Dread the impending ills and prize thy tranquil state."

In vain his weeping love he thus advised;
She longs to meet a parent's sweet embrace,
"Oh, were their sorrowing hearts at least apprized
How Psyche's wondrous lot all fears may chase;
For whom thy love prepared so fair a place!
Let but my bliss their fond complaints repress,
Let me but once behold a mother's face,
Oh, spouse adored! and in full happiness
This love-contented heart its solitude shall bless.

"Oh, by those beauties I must ne'er behold!
The spicy-scented ringlets of thine hair:
By that soft neck my loving arms enfold,
Crown with a kind consent thy Psyche's prayer!
Their dear embrace, their blessing let me share;
So shall I stain our couch with tears no more:
But, blest in thee, resign each other care,
Nor seek again thy secret to explore,
Which yet, denied thy sight, I ever must explore."

Unable to resist her fond request,
Reluctant Cupid thus at last complied,
And sighing clasped her closer to his breast.
"Go then, my Psyche! go, my lovely bride!
But let me in thy faith at least confide,
That by no subtle, impious arts betrayed,
Which, ah! too well I know will all be tried,
Thy simply trusting heart shall e'er be swayed
The secret veil to rend which fate thy screen hath made.

"For danger hovers o'er thy smiling days,
One only way to shield thee yet I know;
Unseen, I may securely guard thy ways,
And save thee from the threatened storm of woe;
But forced, if known, my Psyche to forego,
Thou never, never must again be mine!
What mutual sorrows hence must ceaseless flow!
Compelled thy dear embraces to resign,
While thou to anguish doomed for lost delights shalt pine.

"Solace thy mind with hopes of future joy!
In a dear infant thou shalt see my face;
Blest mother soon of an immortal boy,
In him his father's features thou shalt trace!
Yet go! for thou art free, the bounds of space
Are none for thee: attendant Zephyrs stay,
Speak but thy will, and to the wished-for place
Their lovely mistress swift they shall convey:
Yet hither, ah! return, ere fades the festive day."

"Light of my soul, far dearer than the day!"
Exulting Psyche cries in grateful joy,
"Me all the bliss of earth could ill repay
For thy most sweet, divine society;
To thee again with rapture will I fly,
Nor with less pleasure hail the star of eve
Than when in tedious solitude I sigh;
My vows of silent confidence believe,
Nor think thy Psyche's faith will e'er thy love deceive."

Her suit obtained, in full contentment blest,
Her eyes at length in placid slumbers close.
Sleep, hapless fair! sleep on thy lover's breast!
Ah, not again to taste such pure repose!
Till thy sad heart by long experience knows
How much they err, who, to their interest blind,
Slight the calm peace which from retirement flows!
And while they think their fleeting joys to bind,
Banish the tranquil bliss which heaven for man *design*ed!

CANTO II.

ARGUMENT.

Introduction—Dangers of the World—Psyche, conveyed by Zephyrs, awakes once more in the paternal mansion—Envy of her Sisters—They plot her ruin—Inspire her with suspicion and terror—Psyche's return to the palace of Love—Her disobedience—Love asleep—Psyche's amazement—The flight of Love—Sudden banishment of Psyche from the island of Pleasure—Her lamentations—Comforted by Love—Temple of Venus—Task imposed on Psyche, conditional to her reconciliation with Venus—Psyche soothed and attended by Innocence—Psyche wandering as described in the opening of the first canto.

PSYCHE.

CANTO II.

Oh, happy you! who, blest with present bliss,
See not with fatal prescience future tears,
Nor the dear moment of enjoyment miss
Through gloomy discontent, or sullen fears
Foreboding many a storm for coming years;
Change is the lot of all. Ourselves with scorn
Perhaps shall view what now so fair appears;
And wonder whence the fancied charm was born
Which now with vain despair from our fond grasp is torn.

Vain schemer, think not to prolong thy joy!
But cherish while it lasts the heavenly boon;
Expand thy sails! thy little bark shall fly
With the full tide of pleasure! though it soon
May feel the influence of the changeful moon,
It yet is thine! then let not doubts obscure
With cloudy vapours' veil thy brilliant noon,
Nor let suspicion's tainted breath impure
Poison the favouring gale which speeds thy course secure.

Oh, Psyche, happy in thine ignorance!
Couldst thou but shun this heart-tormenting bane;
Be but content, nor daringly advance
To meet the bitter hour of threatened pain;
Pure spotless dove! seek thy safe nest again;
Let true affection shun the public eye,
And quit the busy circle of the vain,
For there the treacherous snares concealed lie:
Oh, timely warned escape! to safe retirement fly!

Bright shone the morn! and now its golden ray
Dispelled the slumbers from her radiant eyes,
Yet still in dreams her fancy seems to play,
For lo! she sees with rapture and surprise
Full in her view the well-known mansion rise,
And each loved scene of first endearment hails;
The air that first received her infant sighs
With wondring ecstasy she now inhales,
While every trembling nerve soft tenderness assails.

See from the dear pavilion, where she lay,
Breathless she flies with scarce assured feet,
Swift through the garden wings her eager way,
Her mourning parents' ravished eyes to greet
With loveliest apparition strange and sweet:
Their days of anguish all o'erpaid they deem
By one blest hour of ecstasy so great:
Yet doubtingly they gaze, and anxious seem
To ask their raptured souls, "Oh, is this all a dream?"

The wondrous tale attentively they hear,
Repeated oft in broken words of joy,
She in their arms embraced, while every ear
Hangs on their Psyche's lips, and earnestly
On her is fixed each wonder-speaking eye;
Till the sad hour arrives which bids them part,
And twilight darkens o'er the ruddy sky;
Divinely urged they let their child depart,
Pressed with a fond embrace to each adoring heart.

Trusting that wedded to a spouse divine
Secure is now their daughter's happiness,
They half contentedly their child resign,
Check the complaint, the rising sigh suppress,
And wipe the silent drops of bitterness.
Nor must she her departure more delay,
But bids them now their weeping Psyche bless;
Then back to the pavilion bends her way
Ere in the fading west quite sinks expiring day.

But, while her parents listen with delight,
Her sisters' hearts the Furies agitate:
They look with envy on a lot so bright,
And all the honours of her splendid fate,
Scorning the meanness of their humbler state;
And how they best her ruin may devise
With hidden rancour much they meditate,
Yet still they bear themselves in artful guise,
While 'mid the feigned caress, concealed the venom lies.

By malice urged, by ruthless envy stung,
With secret haste to sieze their prey they flew,
Around her neck as in despair they clung;
Her soft complying nature well they knew.
And trusted by delaying to undo;
But when they found her resolute to go,
Their well-laid stratagem they then pursue,
And, while they bid their treacherous sorrows flow,
Thus fright her simple heart with images of woe.

"Oh, hapless Psyche! thoughtless of thy doom!
Yet hear thy sisters who have wept for thee,
Since first a victim to thy living tomb,
Obedient to the oracle's decree,
Constrained we left thee to thy destiny.
Since then no comfort could our woes abate;
While thou wert lulled in false security
We learned the secret horrors of thy fate,
And heard prophetic lips thy future ills relate.

"Yet fearing never to behold thee more,
Our filial care would fain the truth conceal;
But from the sages' cell this ring we bore,
With power each latent magic to reveal:
Some hope from hence our anxious bosoms feel
That we from ruin may our Psyche save,
Since Heaven, propitious to our pious zeal,
Thee to our frequent prayers in pity gave,
That warned thou yet mayst shun thy sad untimely grave.

"Oh! how shall we declare the fatal truth?
How wound thy tender bosom with alarms?
Tell how the graces of thy blooming youth,
Thy more than mortal, all adored charms
Have lain enamoured in a sorcerer's arms?
Oh, Psyche! seize on this decisive hour,
Escape the mischief of impending harms!
Return no more to that enchanted bower,
Fly the magician's arts, and dread his cruel power.

"If, yet reluctant to forego thy love,
Thy furtive joys and solitary state,
Our fond officious care thy doubts reprove,
At least let some precaution guard thy fate,
Nor may our warning love be prized too late;
This night thyself thou mayst convince thine eyes,
Hide but a lamp, and cautiously await
Till in deep slumber thy magician lies,
This ring shall then disclose his foul deformities.

"That monster by the oracle foretold,
Whose cursed spells both gods and men must fear,
In his own image thou shalt then behold,
And shuddering hate what now is prized so dear;
Yet fly not then, though loathsome he appear,
But let this dagger to his breast strike deep;
Thy coward terrors then thou must not hear,
For if with life he rouses from that sleep
Nought then for thee remains, and we must hopeless weep."

Oh! have yon seen, when in the northern sky
The transient flame of lambent lightning plays,
In quick succession lucid streamers fly,
Now flashing roseate, and now milky rays,
While struck with awe the astonished rustics gaze?
Thus o'er her cheek the fleeting signals move,
Now pale with fear, now glowing with the blaze
Of much indignant, still confiding love,
Now horror's lurid hue with shame's deep blushes strove.

On her cold passive hand the ring they place,
And hide the dagger in her folding vest;
Pleased the effects of their dire arts to trace
In the mute agony that swells her breast,
Already in her future ruin blest:
Conscious that now their poor deluded prey
Should never taste again delight or rest,
But sickening in suspicion's gloom decay
Or urged by terrors rash their trecherous will obey.

While yet irresolute with sad surprise,
'Mid doubt and love she stands in strange suspense,
Lo! gliding from her sister's wandering eyes
Returning Zephyrs gently bear her thence;
Lost all her hopes, her joys, her confidence,
Back to the earth her mournful eyes she threw,
As if imploring pity and defence;
While bathed in tears her golden tresses flew,
As in the breeze dispersed they caught the precious dew.

Illumined bright now shines the splendid dome,
Melodious accents her arrival hail:
But not the torches' blaze can chase the gloom,
And all the soothing powers of music fail;
Trembling she seeks her couch with horror pale,
But first a lamp conceals in secret shade,
While unknown terrors all her soul assail.
Thus half their treacherous counsel is obeyed,
For still her gentle soul abhors the murderous blade.

And now, with softest whispers of delight,
Love welcomes Psyche still more fondly dear;
Not unobserved, though hid in deepest night,
The silent anguish of her secret fear.
He thinks that tenderness excites the tear
By the late image of her parents' grief,
And half offended seeks in vain to cheer,
Yet, while he speaks, her sorrows feel relief,
Too soon more keen to sting from this suspension brief!

Allowed to settle on celestial eyes
Soft Sleep exulting now exerts his sway,
From Psyche's anxious pillow gladly flies
To veil those orbs, whose pure and lambent ray
The powers of heaven submissively obey.
Trembling and breathless then she softly rose,
And seized the lamp, where it obscurely lay,
With hand too rashly daring to disclose
The sacred veil which hung mysterious o'er her woes.

Twice, as with agitated step she went,
The lamp expiring shone with doubtful gleam,
As though it warned her from her rash intent:
And twice she paused, and on its trembling beam
Gazed with suspended breath, while voices seem
With murmuring sound along the roof to sigh;
As one just waking from a troubled dream,
With palpitating heart and straining eye,
Still fixed with fear remains still thinks the danger nigh.

Oh, daring Muse! wilt thou indeed essay
To paint the wonders which that lamp could shew?
And canst thou hope in living words to say
The dazzling glories of that heavenly view?
Ah! well I ween, that if with pencil true
That splendid vision could be well exprest,
The fearful awe imprudent Psyche knew
Would seize with rapture every wondering breast,
When Love's all-potent charms divinely stood confest.

All imperceptible to human touch,
His wings display celestial essence light,
The clear effulgence of the blaze is such,
The brilliant plumage shines so heavenly bright
That mortal eyes turn dazzled from the sight;
A youth he seems in manhood's freshest years;
Round his fair neck, as clinging with delight,
Each golden curl resplendently appears,
Or shades his darker brow, which grace majestic wears.

Or o'er his guileless front the ringlets bright
Their rays of sunny lustre seem to throw,
That front than polished ivory more white!
His blooming cheeks with deeper blushes glow
Than roses scattered o'er a bed of snow:
While on his lips, distilled in balmy dews,
(Those lips divine that even in silence know
The heart to touch) persuasion to infuse
Still hangs a rosy charm that never vainly sues.

The friendly curtain of indulgent sleep
Disclosed not yet his eyes' resistless sway,
But from their silky veil there seemed to peep
Some brilliant glances with a softened ray,
Which o'er his features exquisitely play,
And all his polished limbs suffuse with light.
Thus through some narrow space the azure day
Sudden its cheerful rays diffusing bright,
Wide darts its lucid beams, to gild the brow of night.

His fatal arrows and celestial bow
Beside the couch were negligently thrown,
Nor needs the god his dazzling arms, to show
His glorious birth, such beauty round him shone
As sure could spring from Beauty's self alone;
The gloom which glowed o'er all of soft desire;
Could well proclaim him Beauty's cherished son;
And Beauty's self will oft these charms admire,
And steal his witching smile, his glance's living fire.

Speechless with awe, in transport strangely lost
Long Psyche stood with fixed adoring eye;
Her limbs immovable, her senses tost
Between amazement, fear, and ecstasy,
She hangs enamoured o'er the Deity.
Till from her trembling hand extinguished falls
The fatal lamp—He starts—and suddenly
Tremendous thunders echo through the halls,
While ruin's hideous crash bursts o'er the affrighted walls.

Dread horror seizes on her sinking heart,
A mortal chillness shudders at her breast,
Her soul shrinks fainting from death's icy dart,
The groan scarce uttered dies but half exprest,
And down she sinks in deadly swoon oppprest:
But when at length, awaking from her trance,
The terrors of her fate stand all confest,
In vain she casts around her timid glance,
The rudely frowning scenes her former joys enhance.

No traces of those joys, alas, remain!
A desert solitude alone appears.
No verdant shade relieves the sandy plain,
The wide-spread waste no gentle fountain cheers,
One barren face the dreary prospect wears:
Nought through the vast horizon meets her eye
To calm the dismal tumult of her fears,
No trace of human habitation nigh,
A sandy wild beneath, above a threatening sky.

The mists of morn yet chill the gloomy air,
And heavily obscure the clouded skies;
In the mute anguish of a fixed despair
Still on the ground immoveable she lies;
At length, with lifted hands and streaming eyes,
Her mournful prayers invoke offended Love,
"Oh, let me hear thy voice once more," she cries,
"In death at least thy pity let me move,
And death, if but forgiven, a kind relief will prove.

"For what can life to thy lost Psyche give,
What can it offer but a gloomy void?
Why thus abandoned should I wish to live?
To mourn the pleasures which I once enjoyed,
The bliss my own rash folly hath destroyed.
Of all my soul most prized, or held most dear,
Nought but the sad remembrance doth abide,
And late repentance of my impious fear:
Remorse and vain regret what living soul can bear!

"Oh, art thou then indeed for ever gone!
And art thou heedless of thy Psyche's woe!
From these fond arms for ever art thou flown,
And unregarded must my sorrows flow!
Ah! why too happy did I ever know
The rapturous charms thy tenderness inspires?
Ah! why did thy affections stoop so low?
Why kindle in a mortal breast such fires,
Or with celestial love inflame such rash desires?

" Abandoned thus for ever by thy love,
No greater punishment I now can bear,
From fate no further malice can I prove;
Not all the horrors of this desert drear,
Nor death itself can now excite a fear;
The peopled earth a solitude as vast
To this despairing heart would now appear;
Here then, my transient joys for ever past,
Let thine expiring bride thy pardon gain at last!"

Now prostrate on the bare unfriendly ground,
She waits her doom in silent agony;
When lo! the well-known soft celestial sound
She hears once more with breathless ecstasy,
" Oh! yet too dearly loved! Lost Psyche! Why
With cruel fate wouldst thou unite thy power,
And force me thus thy arms adored to fly?
Yet cheer thy drooping soul, some happier hour
Thy banish'd steps may lead back to thy lover's bower.

" Though angry Venus we no more can shun,
Appease that anger and I yet am thine!
Lo! where her temple glitters to the sun;
With humble penitence approach her shrine
Perhaps to pity she may yet incline:
But should her cruel wrath these hopes deceive,
And thou, alas! must never more be mine,
Yet shall thy lover ne'er his Psyche leave,
But, if the fates allow, unseen thy woes relieve.

"Stronger than I, they now forbid my stay;
Psyche, beloved, adieu!" Scarce can she hear
The last faint words, which gently melt away;
And now more faint the dying sounds appear,
Borne to a distance from her longing ear;
Yet still attentively she stands unmoved,
To catch those accents which her soul could cheer,
That soothing voice which had so sweetly proved
That still his tender heart offending Psyche loved!

And now the joyous sun had cleared the sky,
The mist dispelled revealed the splendid fane;
A palmy grove majestically high
Screens the fair building from the desert plain;
Of alabaster white and free from stain
'Mid the tall trees the tapering columns rose;
Thither, with fainting steps, and weary pain,
Obedient to the voice at length she goes,
And at the threshold seeks protection and repose.

Round the soft scene immortal roses bloom,
While lucid myrtles in the breezes play;
No savage beast did ever yet presume
With foot impure within the grove to stray,
And far from hence flies every bird of prey;
Thus, 'mid the sandy Garamantian wild,
When Macedonia's lord pursued his way,
The sacred temple of great Ammon smiled,
And green encircling shades the long fatigue beguiled.

With awe that fearfully her doom awaits
Still at the portal Psyche timid lies,
When, lo! advancing from the hallowed gates
Trembling she views with reverential eyes
An aged priest. A myrtle bough supplies
A wand, and roses bind his snowy brows:
"Bear hence thy feet profane, (he sternly cries,)
Thy longer stay the goddess disallows,
Fly, nor her fiercer wrath too daringly arouse!"

His pure white robe imploringly she held,
And, bathed in tears, embraced his sacred knees;
Her mournful charms relenting he beheld,
And melting pity in his eye she sees;
"Hope not (he cries) the goddess to appease,
Retire at awful distance from her shrine,
But seek the refuge of those sheltering trees,
And now thy soul with humble awe incline
To hear her sacred will, and mark the words divine."

"Presumptuous Psyche! whose aspiring soul
The God of Love has dared to arrogate;
Rival of Venus! whose supreme control
Is now asserted by all-ruling fate,
No suppliant tears her vengeance shall abate
Till thou hast raised an altar to her power,
Where perfect happiness, in lonely state,
Has fixed her temple in secluded bower,
By foot impure of man untrodden to this hour!

" And on the altar must thou place an urn
Filled from immortal Beauty's sacred spring,
Which foul deformity to grace can turn,
And back to fond affection's eyes can bring
The charms which fleeting fled on transient wing;
Snatched from the rugged steep where first they rise,
Dark rocks their crystal source o'ershadowing,
Let their clear water sparkle to the skies
Where cloudless lustre beams which happiness supplies!

" To Venus thus for ever reconciled.
(This one atonement all her wrath disarms,)
From thy loved Cupid then no more exiled
There shalt thou, free from sorrow and alarms,
Enjoy for ever his celestial charms.
But never shalt thou taste a pure repose,
Nor ever meet thy lover's circling arms,
Till, all subdued that shall thy steps oppose,
Thy perils there shall end, escaped from all thy foes."

With meek submissive woe she heard her doom,
Nor to the holy minister replied;
But in the myrtle grove's mysterious gloom
She silently retired her grief to hide.
Hopeless to tread the waste without a guide,
All unrefreshed and faint from toil she lies:
When lo! her present wants are all supplied,
Sent by the hand of Love a turtle flies,
And sets delicious food before her wondering eyes.

Cheered by the favouring omen, softer tears
Relieve her bosom from its cruel weight:
She blames the sad despondence of her fears,
When still protected by a power so great,
His tenderness her toils will mitigate.
Then with renewed strength at length she goes,
Hoping to find some skilled in secret fate,
Some learned sage, who haply might disclose
Where lay that blissful bower, the end of all her woes.

And as she went, behold, with hovering flight
The dove preceded still her doubtful way;
Its spotless plumage of the purest white,
Which shone resplendent in the blaze of day,
Could even in darkest gloom a light display;
Of heavenly birth, when first to mortals given
Named Innocence. But ah! too short its stay;
By ravenous birds it fearfully was driven
Back to reside with Love, a denizen of heaven.

Now through the trackless wild, o'er many a mile
The messenger of Cupid led the fair,
And cheered with hope her solitary toil,
Till now a brighter face the prospects wear,
Past are the sandy wastes and deserts bare,
And many a verdant hill, and grassy dale,
And trace, that mortal culture might declare,
And many a wild wood dark, and joyous vale
Appeared her soul to sooth, could soothing scenes avail.

But other fears her timid soul distress,
'Mid strangers unprotected and alone
The desert wildness alarmed her less
Than cities, thus unfriended and unknown;
But where the path was all by moss o'ergrown,
There still she chose her solitary way,
Where'er her faithful Dove before had flown
Fearful of nought she might securely stray,
For still his care supplied the wants of every day.

And still she entered every sacred grove
And homage paid to each divinity,
But chief the altar of almighty Love
Weeping embraced with fond imploring eye;
To every oracle her hopes apply,
Instructions for her dangerous path to gain:
Exclaiming oft, with a desponding sigh,
"Ah! how through all such dangers, toils, and pain,
Shall Psyche's helpless steps their object e'er attain?"

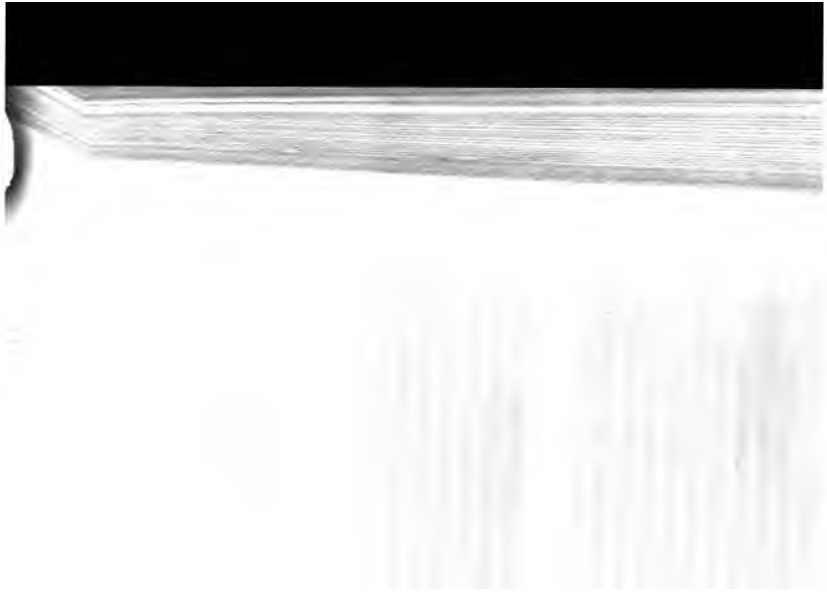
And now, remote from every peopled town,
One sultry day a cooling bower she found:
There, as I whilom sung, she laid her down,
Where rich profusion of gay flowers around
Had decked with artless shew the sloping ground;
There the wild rose and modest violet grow,
There all thy charms, Narcissus! still abound:
There wrapt in verdure fragrant lilies blow,
Lilies that love the vale, and hide their bells of snow.

Thy flowers, Adonis! bright vermilion shew;
Still for his love the yellow Crocus pines;
There, while indignant blushes seem to glow,
Beloved by Phœbus his Acanthus shines;
Reseda still her drooping head reclines
With faithful homage to his golden rays,
And, though 'mid clouds their lustre he resigns,
An image of the constant heart displays,
While silent still she turns her fond pursuing gaze.

And every sweet that Spring with fairy hands
Scatters in thy green path, enchanting May!
And every flowering shrub there clustering stands
As though they wooed her to a short delay,
Yielding a charm to sooth her weary way;
Soft with the tufted moss, and sweet the breeze,
With lulling sound the murmuring waters play,
With lulling sound from all the rustling trees
The fragrant gale invites to cool refreshing ease.

There as she sought repose, her sorrowing heart
Recalled her absent love with bitter sighs;
Regret had deeply fixed the poisoned dart,
Which ever rankling in her bosom lies;
In vain she seeks to close her weary eyes,
Those eyes still swim incessantly in tears
Hope in her cheerless bosom fading dies,
Distracted by a thousand cruel fears,
While banished from his love for ever she appears.

Oh! thou best comforter of that sad heart
Whom fortune's spite assails; come, gentle Sleep,
The weary mourner sooth! for well the art
Thou knowest in soft forgetfulness to steep
The eyes which sorrow taught to watch and weep;
Let blissful visions now her spirits cheer,
Or lull her cares to peace in slumbers deep,
Till, from fatigue refreshed and anxious fear,
Hope, like the morning star, once more shall reappear.



CANTO III.

ARGUMENT.

Praise of Love—Psyche's Champion, with his attendant Constance, described—The Knight assumes the command of Passion, who appears as a Lion—Psyche proceeds under the protection of the Knight—Persuaded to repose in the Bower of Loose Delight—Her escape from thence—Led by Innocence to Retirement—Psyche meets Vanity and Flattery—Betrayed by them into the power of Ambition—Rescued by her Knight.

PSYCHE.

CANTO III.

Oh, who art thou who darest of Love complain?
He is a gentle spirit and injures none!
His foes are ours; from them the bitter pain,
The keen, deep anguish, the heart-rending groan,
Which in his milder reign are never known.
His tears are softer than the April showers,
White-handed Innocence supports his throne,
His sighs are sweet as breath of earliest flowers,
Affection guides his steps, and peace protects his bowers.

But scarce admittance he on earth can find,
Opposed by vanity, by fraud ensnared,
Suspicion frights him from the gloomy mind,
And jealousy in vain his smiles has shared,
Whose sullen frown the gentle godhead scared;
From passion's rapid blaze in haste he flies,
His wings alone the fiercer flame has spared;
From him ambition turns his scornful eyes,
And avarice, slave to gold, a generous lord denies

But chief Inconstancy his power destroys;
To mock his lovely form, an idle train
With magic skill she dressed in transient toys,
By these the selfish votaries she can gain
Whom Love's more simple bands could ne'er detain.
Ah! how shall Psyche through such mortal foes
The fated end of all her toils attain?
Sadly she ponders o'er her hopeless woes,
Till on the pillowy turf she sinks to short repose.

But, as the careless lamb, whom playful chance,
Thoughtless of danger has enticed to rove,
Amidst her gambols casts a sudden glance
Where lurks her wily foe within the grove,
Anxious to fly, but still afraid to move,
All hopeless of escape—so looks the maid,
Such dread her half-awakened senses prove,
When roused from sleep before her eyes dismayed
A knight all armed appears close 'mid the embowering shade.

Trembling she gazed, until the stranger knight,
Tempering with mildest courtesy the awe
Which majesty inspired, low in her sight
Obeisance made; nor would he nearer draw,
Till, half subdued surprise and fear, he saw
Pale terror yielding to the rosy grace,
The pure congealed blood begin to thaw,
And flowing through her crystal veins apace
Suffuse with mantling blush her mild celestial face.

Gently approaching then with fairest speech
He proffered service to the lonely dame,
And prayed her that she might not so impeach
The honour of his youth's yet spotless fame,
As aught to fear which might his knighthood shame;
But if her unprotected steps to guard,
The glory of her champion he might claim,
He asked no other guerdon or reward,
Than what bright honour's self might to his deeds award.

Doubting and musing much within her mind,
With half-suspicious, half-confiding eye,
A while she stood; her thoughts bewildered find
No utterance, unwilling to deny
Such proffered aid, yet bashful to reply
With quick assent, since though concealed his face
Beneath his helm, yet might she well espy
And in each fair proportion plainly trace
The symmetry of form, and perfect youthful grace.

Hard were it to describe the nameless charm
That o'er each limb, in every action played,
The softness of that voice, which could disarm
The hand of fury of its deadly blade:
In shining armour was the youth arrayed,
And on his shield a bleeding heart he bore,
His lofty crest light plumes of azure shade,
There shone a wounded dragon bathed in gore,
And bright with silver beamed the silken scarf he wore.

His milk-white steed with glittering trappings blazed,
Whose reins a beauteous boy attendant held,
On the fair squire with wonder Psyche gazed,
For scarce he seemed of age to bear the shield,
Far less a pondrous lance, or sword to wield;
Yet well this little page his lord had served,
His youthful arm had many a foe repelled,
His watchful eye from many a snare preserved,
Nor ever from his steps in any danger swerved.

Graced with the gift of a perpetual youth,
No lapse of years had power his form to change;
Constance was named the boy, whose matchless truth,
Though oft enticed with other lords to range,
Nor fraud, nor force could from that knight estrange;
His mantle of celestial blue was made,
And its bright texture wrought with art so strange
That the fresh brilliant gloss could never fade,
And lustre yet unknown to Psyche's eyes displayed.

Thus while she gazed, behold with horrid roar
A lion from the neighbouring forest rushed,
A golden chain around his neck he bore,
Which richly glowing with carbuncles blushed,
While his fierce eye-balls fiery rage had flushed:
Forth steps the youth before the affrighted fair,
Who in his mighty paw already crushed
Seems in the terrors of her wild despair,
And her mute quivering lips a death-like paleness wear.

But scarce the kingly beast the knight beheld,
When crouching low, submissive at his feet,
His wrath extinguished, and his valour quelled,
He seemed with reverence and obeisance sweet
Him as his long-acknowledged lord to greet.
While in acceptance of the new command,
Well pleased the youth received the homage meet,
Then seized the splendid chain with steady hand,
Full confident to rule, and every foe withstand.

And, when at length recovered from her fear
The timed Psyche mounts his docile steed,
Much prayed, she tells to his attentive ear
(As on her purposed journey they proceed)
The doubtful course the oracle decreed.
And how, observant of her friendly guide,
She still pursued its flight, with all the speed
Her fainting strength had hitherto supplied:
What pathless wilds she crossed! What forests darkling wide!

Which having heard, the courteous knight began
With counsel sweet to soothe her wounded heart;
Divinely eloquent, persuasion ran
The herald of his words ere they depart
His lips, which well might confidence impart,
As he revealed how he himself was bound
By solemn vow, that neither force nor art
His helmet should unloose, till he had found
The bower of happiness, that long-sought fairy ground.

" I too (he said) divided from my love,
The offended power of Venus deprecate,
Like thee, through paths untrodden, sadly rove
In search of that fair spot prescribed by fate,
The blessed term of my afflicted state,
Where I the mistress of my soul shall find,
For whose dear sake no toil to me seems great
Nor any dangers to my search assigned
Can from its purpose fright my ardent longing mind.

" Psyche! thy soft and sympathizing heart
Shall share the raptures of thy loyal knight;
He too, in thy content shall bear a part,
Blest witness of thy new-restored delight;
My vows of true allegiance here I plight,
Ne'er to forsake thee till thy perils end,
Thy steps to guard, in thy protection fight,
By counsel aid, and by my arm defend,
And prove myself in all thy champion and thy friend."

So on they went, her cheerless heart revived
By promised succour in her doubtful way;
And much of hope she to herself derived,
From the warm eagerness his lips display
In their pursuit to suffer no delay:
" And sure, (she softly sighed) my dearest Lord,
Thy watchful love still guides me as I stray,
Not chance alone could such an aid afford,
Lo! beasts of prey confess the heaven-assisted sword."

Now from his crystal urn, with chilling hand,
Vesper had sprinkled all the earth with dew,
A misty veil obscured the neighbouring land,
And shut the fading landscape from their view;
A beaten path they eagerly pursue,
(For now refreshment and repose they need,
As Psyche weary of long travel grew,)
Where by a river's bank it seemed to lead,
Along its sinuous course they heedlessly proceed.

At length the lordly beast that bore the knight
Explored the river's depth with sudden bound:
Psyche, who heard the plunge with strange affright,
Her champion re-assured with welcome sound,
That he the other bank had safely found;
And, while he spoke, emerging from the shade,
A joyous goodly train appear around,
Of many a gallant youth and white-robed maid,
Who grateful welcome gave, and courteous greeting paid.

Quick through the trees a thousand torches blazed
The gloom to banish, and the scene disclose
To Psyche, all irresolute, amazed:
A bridge with stately arch at distance rose,
Thither at once the gay assembly goes,
Not unattended by the charmed knight,
Inviting Psyche to partake repose,
Pointing where shone their bower illumined bright,
Their bower so passing fair, their bower of loose Delight.

At length with timid foot the bridge she past,
And to her guardian knight clung fearfully,
While many a doubting glance around she cast,
If still her watchful dove she might espy;
Feebly it seemed on labouring wing to fly,
Till, dazzled by the sudden glare around,
In painful trance it closed its dizzy eye,
And had it not fair Psyche's bosom found,
Its drooping pinion soon had touched the unhallowed ground.

Hence there arose within her heart sore dread
Which no alluring pleasure could dispel;
The splendid hall with luscious banquet spread,
The soft-breathed flutes which in sweet concert swell,
With melody of song unspeakable;
Nor the light dancing troop in roses drest,
Could chase the terrors which she dared not tell,
While, fondly cherished in her anxious breast,
She strove in vain to soothe the fluttering bird to rest.

On a soft downy couch the guests are placed,
And close behind them stands their watchful page,
But much his strict attendance there disgraced,
And much was scorned his green and tender age,
His calm fixed eye, and steady aspect sage:
But him nor rude disdain, nor mockery,
Nor soothing blandishments could e'er engage
The wanton mazes of their sports to try,
Or from his lord to turn his firm adhering eye.

White-bosomed nymphs around with loosened zones
All on the guests obsequiously tend,
Some sing of love with soft expiring tones,
While Psyche's melting eyes the strain commend:
Some o'er their heads the canopy suspend,
Some hold the sparkling bowl, while some with skill
Ambrosial showers and balmy juices blend,
Or the gay lamps with liquid odours fill,
Whose many-coloured fires divinest sweets distil.

And now a softer light they seemed to shed,
And sweetest music ushered in their queen:
Her languid steps by winged boys are led,
Who in their semblance might have Cupids been;
Close wrapt in veils her following train was seen;
Herself looked lovely in her loose attire,
Her smiling eyes gave lustre to the scene,
And still, where'er they turned their wanton fire,
Each thrilling nerve confessed the rapture they inspire.

The stranger guests she viewed with welcome glad,
And crowned the banquet with reception sweet,
To fill the glowing bowl her nymphs she bad,
And, graceful rising from her splendid seat,
She would herself present the sparkling treat;
When lo! the dove, alarmed, with sudden start,
Spurned the bright cup, and dashed it at her feet,
For well he knew 'twas mixed with treacherous art
To sting his Psyche's breast with agonizing smart.

Regardless of her supplicating tears,
Each eye with vengeful rage the insult sees,
Her knight's protection now in vain appears;
The offended sovereign anxious to appease,
A thousand hands prepare the dove to seize:
Nor was this all, for as the tumult rose,
Sudden more thick than swarm of summer bees,
The secret dens their venomed hoards disclose,
And horror at the sight her vital spirits froze.

Hissing aloud with undulations dire,
Their forked tongues unnumbered serpents show,
Their tainted breath emitting poisonous fire,
All turn on Psyche as their mortal foe;
But he whose arm was never weak or slow,
Now rushed before her with resistless spring,
On either side the oft-repeated blow
Repulsed the malace of their deadly sting,
While sparks of wrathful fire from their fierce jaws th
fling.

"Fly, Psyche! these are slander's hellish brood!
"Contest I know is vain," her champion cried.
Her passage now the opposing train withstood:
Struck with disgust their hideous forms she spied,
For lo! each silken veil is thrown aside,
And foul deformity, and filth obscene,
With monstrous shapes appear on every side:
But vanished is their fair and treacherous queen
And with her every charm that decked the enchante
scene.

Meanwhile the dove had soared above their reach,
But hovered still in anxious Psyche's sight.
Precursor of escape, it seemed to teach
Whither she safest might direct her flight,
And find a passport in her foes' despight;
One rugged path there lay with briars o'ergrown,
Then dark and dismal with the shades of night,
Thither the dove on rapid wing had flown,
Conspicuous 'mid the gloom its silver plumage shone.

Yet she delayed, o'ercome by terror's power,
And scarce her fainting form the knight could shield,
When lo! still active in the trying hour,
Constance rushed fearless through the dreadful field,
With breast-plate firm invulnerably steeled,
He heeded not the storms which round him press,
To any perils he disdained to yield,
Endued with prudence as with hardiness,
And ever skilled to bring due succour in distress.

Lo! swift returning on his master's steed,
In his right hand he held the lion's chain,
The mighty beast his gentleness could lead,
Though little used to bear the curb or rein,
And 'mid those groves accustomed to remain,
Yet now prepared, with sweet submissive grace,
He ready stands the knight to bear again,
While trembling Psyche on the steed they place,
Which swift as lightning flies far from the dreadful chase.

Rough was the rude wild way, and many a thorn
Tore her loose garments in the rapid flight,
O'er many a league the panting fair is borne,
Till now, emerging from the shades of night,
The grey-eyed morn stole forth her pallid light.
Then first she paused, unable to proceed,
Exhausted with fatigue, and pain, and fright.
" Turn, Psyche," cried the youth, " relax thy speed,
" And see thyself at length from thy pursuers freed."

'Mid the thick forest was a lonely dell,
Where foot of man was seldom known to tread,
The sloping hills all round in graceful swell
The little green with woods environed;
Hither the dove their passive course had led:
Here the thin smoke blue rising 'mid the trees,
Where broad and brown the deepest umbrage spead,
Spoke the abode of safe retired ease,
And Psyche gladly there her dove descending sees.

In lowly cottage, walled with mossy sod,
Close by a little spring's perpetual rill,
A hermit dwelt, who many a year had trod
With sacred solitude that pine-clad hill,
And loved with holy images to fill
His soul enrapt; yet courteous then besought
A while secluded here to rest; and still
Replete with kind and hospitable thought,
To a sequestered bower the wearied Psyche brought.

Skilled in the virtue of each healing flower,
And the wild fruits restoring juice to blend,
He spreads the frugal fare of wholesome power,
And heedfully his cares their wants attend;
A docile ear to his advice they lend,
And sage instruction from his precepts take,
Which much their future journey may befriend;
Wisdom with soothing eloquence he spake,
Pleased to resolve their doubts, and all their cares partake.

In those sweet placid scenes awhile they rest,
Till Psyche finds her fainting strength revive;
And here her dove, as in a quiet nest,
Delighted seems to sportive joy alive;
And hence they surest confidence derive.
He plumes his wings, and through his swelling throat
(No more a ruffled, fearful fugitive)
In gentle murmurs pours his dulcet note,
While Psyche listening sits in some still vale remote.

Oh! have you never known the silent charm
That undisturbed retirement yields the soul,
Where no intruder might your peace alarm,
And tenderness hath wept without control,
While melting fondness o'er the bosom stole?
Did fancy never in some lonely grove,
Abridge the hours which must in abscence roll?
Those pensive pleasures did you never prove,
Oh, you have never loved! you know not what is lo

They do not love, who can to these prefer
The tumult of the gay, or folly's roar;
The muse they know not; nor delight in her
Who can the troubled soul to rest restore,
Calm Contemplation: Yes, I must deplore
Their joyless state, even more than his who mourns
His love for ever lost; delight no more
Unto his widowed heart indeed returns,
Yet, while he weeps, his soul their cold indifference spurns.

But if soft hope illumines fancy's dream,
Assuring him of love and constancy,
How exquisite do then the moments seem,
When he may hide himself from every eye,
And cherish the dear thought in secrecy!
While sweet remembrance soothes his thrilling heart,
And brings once more past hours of kindness nigh,
Recals the look of love when forced to part,
And turns to drops of joy the tears that sadly start.

Forgetful of the dangers of her way,
Imagination oft would Psyche bear
To her long travel's end, and that blest day
When Love unveiled should to her eyes appear;
When she might view his charms exempt from fear,
Taste his pure kisses, feel his balmy sighs,
Rest in the fond embrace of arms so dear,
Gaze with soft rapture on his melting eyes,
And hear his voice divine, the music of the skies!

Their destined course impatient to achieve,
The knight is urgent onward to proceed:
Cheered with recruited strength, they take their leave
Of their kind host, and pay their grateful meed
Of warmest thanks sincere; onward they speed
Their sunless journey long through forests green,
And tangled thickets rank with many a weed;
And when at closing day a hut is seen,
They seek the humble roof, nor scorn its welcome mean.

It happened once that, early roused from sleep,
(Ere her damp veil the virgin Morn had cast
From her pale face, not yet with blushes deep
Lovely suffused, as when approaching fast
His herald star proclaims her spouse at last)
Psyche, forsaking soon her homely bed,
Alone had fearless the low threshold past,
And, to beguile the hours which lingering fled,
Light o'er the dewy plain walked forth with nimble tread.

Yet though the knight close wrapt in slumber lay,
Her steps, at distance, still the page pursued,
Fearful that danger might befal her way,
Or lest, entangled in the mazy wood,
Returning she should miss the pathway rude.
The lark now hails the sun with rapturous song,
The cheerful earth resounds with gratitude,
O'er the gay scene as Psyche tript along,
She felt her spirits rise, her lightened heart grow strong.

And hark, soft music steals upon the ear!
'Tis woman's voice most exquisitely sweet!
Behold two female forms approaching near
Arrest with wonder Psyche's timid feet;
On a gay car, by speckled panthers fleet
Is drawn in gallant state a seeming queen,
And at her foot, on low but graceful seat,
A gentle nymph of lovely form is seen,
In robe of fairest white, with scarf of pleasant green.

In strains of most bewitching harmony,
And still adapted to her sovereign's praise,
She filled the groves with such sweet melody,
That, quiet o'ercome with rapture and amaze,
Psyche stood listening to the warbled lays;
Yet with a sullen, scarce approving ear
Her mistress sits, but with attentive gaze
Her eyes she fixes on a mirror clear,
Where still by fancy's spell unrivalled charms appear.

And, as she looked with aspect ever new,
She seemed on change and novel grace intent,
Her robe was formed of ever-varying hue,
And whimsically placed each ornament;
On her attire, with rich luxuriance spent,
The treasures of the earth, the sea, the air,
Are vainly heaped her wishes to content;
Yet were her arms and snowy bosom bare,
And both in painted pride shone exquisitely fair.

Her braided tresses in profusion drest,
Circled with diadem, and nodding plumes,
Sported their artful ringlets o'er her breast,
And to the breezes gave their rich perfumes;
Her cheek with tint of borrowed roses blooms:
Used to receive from all rich offerings,
She quaffs with conscious right the fragrant fumes
Which her attendant from a censer flings,
Who graceful feeds the flame with incense while she sings.

Soon as her glance fair Psyche's form had caught,
Her soft attendant smiling she addressed:
"Behold, Lusinga! could'st thou e'er have thought
That these wild woods were so in beauty blest?
Let but that nymph in my attire be drest,
And scarce her loveliness will yield to mine!
At least invite her in our bower to rest,
Before her eyes let all my splendour shine,
Perhaps to dwell with us her heart we may incline."

With softest smile applauding all she heard,
Lusinga bowing left her golden seat,
And Psyche, who at first in doubt had feared
While listening to the lay so silver sweet,
Now passive followed with unconscious feet;
Till Constance, all alarmed, impatient flew,
And soft his whispers of the maid entreat
To fly the Syren's song, for well he knew
What lurking dangers hence would to his Lord ensue.

" Oh, do not trust her treacherous lips," he cried,
" She is the subtle slave of Vanity,
Her queen, the child of folly, and of pride,
To lure thee to her power each art will try,
Nor ever will release thee peaceably."
He spoke, but spoke in vain, far lo! from far,
Of giant port they fast approaching spy
A knight, high mounted on a glittering car,
From whose conspicuous crest flames wide a dazzling star.

" Psyche, escape! Ambition is at hand!"
The page exclaims: while swift as thought he flies
She would have followed, but with parley bland
Lusinga soon her terrors pacifies.
" Fair nymph, ascend my car," the sovereign cries,
" I will convey thee where thy wishes lead,
Haply the safest course I may advise
How thou thy journey mayst perform with speed;
For ne'er in woods to dwell such beauty was decreed."

So gently urgent her consent they wooed
With much persuasion of the stranger knight,
That yielding Psyche now no more withstood,
But, pointing out to her observant sight
The humble cot where she had passed the night,
She prayed her kind conductress there to turn,
And promised to herself what vast delight
Her wondering knight would feel at her return,
And with what blushing shame the timid page would burn.

But scarcely had she climbed the fatal car,
When swifter than the wind the panthers flew,
The traversed plains and woods, receding far,
Soon shut from trembling Psyche's anxious view
The spot where she had left her guardian true;
With desperate efforts, all in vain she tries
To escape the ills which now too sure she knew
Must from her ill-placed confidence arise:
Betrayed—Ah! self-betrayed, a wretched sacrifice.

She strove to quit the car with sudden bound,
Ah, vain attempt! she now perceived too late
A thousand silken trammels, subtly wound
O'er her fair form, detained her as she sate:
Lost in despair she yields to her sad fate,
And silent hears, but with augmented fright,
The queen describe her brother's splended state,
Who now outstripped them by his rapid flight,
And pressed his foaming steeds to gain the arduous height.

High o'er the spacious plain a mountain rose,
A stately castle on its summit stood:
Huge craggy cliffs behind their strength oppose
To the rough surges of the dashing flood;
The rocky shores a boldly rising wood
On either side conceals; bright shine the towers,
And seem to smile upon the billows rude.
In front the eye, with comprehensive powers,
Sees wide-extended plains enriched with splendid bowers.

Hither they bore the sad reluctant fair,
Who mounts with dizzy eye the awful steep;
The blazing structure seems high poised in air,
And its light pillars tremble o'er the deep:
As yet the heavens are calm, the tempests sleep
She knows not half the horrors of her fate:
Nor feels the approaching ruin's whirlwind swee
Yet with ill-boding fears she past the gate,
And turned with sickening dread from scene
gorgeous state.

In vain the haughty master of the hall
Invites her to partake his regal throne,
With cold indifference she looks on all
The gilded trophies, and the well-wrought stone
Which in triumphal arches proudly shone:
And as she casts around her timid eye,
Back to her knight her trembling heart is flown
And many an anxious wish, and many a sigh
Invokes his gallant arm protection to supply.

Sudden the lurid heavens obscurely frown,
And sweeping gusts the coming storm proclaim
Flattery's soft voice the howling tempests drown
While the roofs catch the greedy lightning's flai
Loud in their fears, the attendant train exclaim
The light-built fabric ne'er can stand the blast,
And all its insecure foundations blame:
Tumultuously they rush: the chief aghast
Beholds his throne o'erturn'd, his train dispersing

Psyche dismayed, yet thoughtful of escape,
In anxious silence to the portal prest;
And freedom would have hailed in any shape,
Though seen in death's tremendous colours drest:
But ah! she feels the knight's strong grasp arrest
Her trembling steps. "Think not," he cries, "to fly
"With yon false crowd, who, by my favours blest,
Can now desert me, when with changeful eye
Inclement fortune frowns from yon dark angry sky."

While yet he spoke loud bursts the groaning hall,
With frightful peal the thundering domes resound,
Disjointed columns in wild ruin fall,
While the huge arches tremble to the ground.
Yet unappalled amid the crush is found
The daring chief: his hold he firm maintains
Though hideous devastation roars around:
Plunged headlong down his prey he still sustains,
Who in his powerful grasp in death-like swoon remains.

Down sinks the palace with its mighty lord,
Hurled from the awful steep with vehemence
Even to the floods beneath, which angry roared
And gaping wide received the weight immense:
Indignant still, with fearless confidence
He rose high mounting o'er the heaving waves;
Against their rage one arm is his defence,
The other still his lovely burden saves,
Though strong the billows beat, and fierce the tempest raves.

The blazing star yet shone upon his brow,
And flamed triumph o'er the dashing main:
He rides secure the watery waste, and now
The sheltering shore he might in safety gain;
The sheltering shore he shuns with proud disdain,
And breasts the adverse tide. Ah, rash resource!
Yon vessel, Prince, thou never shalt attain!
For plunging 'mid the deep, with generous force,
See where the lion's lord pursues thy hardy course!

Psyche a well-known voice to life restores,
Once more her eyes unclosing view the light,
But not the waters, nor receding shores,
One only object can arrest her sight,
High o'er the flood she sees her valiant knight,
And sudden joy, and hope scarce trusted cheer
Even in that awful moment's dread affright;
Her feeble cry indeed he cannot hear,
But sees her out-stretched arms, and seems already near.

In vain the giant knight exerts his strength;
Urged by the impetuous youth the lion prest,
And gaining fast upon his flight, at length
Prepared his daring progress to arrest,
And seized with furious jaw his struggling breast;
Gasping he loosed his hold—and Psyche lost
The o'erwhelming wave with ruin had opprest,
But Constance, ever near when needed most,
The sinking beauty caught, and bore her to the coast.

Stung with the shame of the relinquished prey,
Mad with revenge, and hate, and conscious pride,
The knight recovered from his short dismay,
Dashes resistless through the foaming tide;
The billows yielding to his arm divide,
As rushing on the youth he seeks the shore;
But now a combat strange on either side
Amid the waves begins; each hopes no more
The engulphing deep his foe shall e'er to light restore.

Beside the cold inhospitable lands,
Where suns long absent dawn with lustre pale,
Thus on his bark the bold Biscayen stands,
And bids his javelin rouse the parent whale;
Fear, pain, and rage at once her breast assail,
The agitated ocean foams around,
Lashed by the sounding fury of her tail,
Or as she mounts the surge with frightful bound,
Wide echoing to her cries the bellowing shores resound.

Fierce was the contest, but at length subdued,
The youth exulting sees his giant foe.
With wonder still the enormous limbs he viewed,
Which lifeless now the waves supporting show.
His starred helm, that now was first laid low,
He seized as trophy of the wonderous fight,
And bade the sparkling gem on Constance glow.
While Psyche's eyes, soft beaming with delight,
Through tears of grateful praise applaud her gallant knight.

CANTO IV.

ARGUMENT.

Introduction—Sympathy—Suspicion—Psyche benighted—Credulity represented, according to a Picture by Apelles, as an Old Woman, the devoted prey of Slander, or the Blatant Beast—Contest between the Knight and Slander—The Knight wounded—Slander Flies—Credulity leads Psyche to the Castle of Suspicion—Psyche deluded, laments the desertion of her Knight to the train of Inconstancy—Psyche betrayed by Suspicion into the power of Jealousy—Persuaded by him that her Knight, by whom she was then abandoned, was indeed Love—Psyche delivered by her Knight—Reconciliation.

PSYCHE

CANTO IV.

FULL gladsome was my heart ere while to tell
How proud Ambition owned superior Love;
For ah! too oft his sterner power could quell
The mild affections which more gently move,
And rather silent fled than with him strove:
For Love content and tranquil saw with dread
The busy scenes Ambition's schemes approve,
And by the hand of Peace obscurely led,
From pride of public life disgusted ever fled.

There are who know not the delicious charm
Of sympathizing hearts; let such employ
Their active minds: the trumpet's loud alarm
Shall yield them hope of honourable joy,
And courts may lure them with each splendid toy:
But ne'er may vanity or thirst of fame
The dearer bliss of loving life destroy!
Oh! blind to man's chief good who Love disclaim,
And barter pure delight for glory's empty name!

Blest Psyche! thou hast 'scaped the tyrant's power
Thy gentle heart shall never know the pain
Which tortures Pride in his most prosperous hour:
Yet dangers still unsung for thee remain;
Nor must thou unmolested hope to gain
Immortal beauty's never-failing spring;
Oh! no—nor yet tranquillity attain:
But though thy heart the pangs of doubt may sting,
Thy faithful knight shall yet thy steps in safety bring.

Warned by late peril now she scarcely dares
Quit for one moment his protecting eye:
Sure in his sight, her soul of nought despairs,
And nought looks dreadful when that arm is nigh
On which her hopes with confidence rely;
By his advice their constant course they bend,
He points where hidden danger they should fly,
On him securely, as her heaven-sent friend,
She bids her grateful heart contentedly depend.

Oh! who the exquisite delight can tell,
The joy which mutual confidence imparts?
Or who can paint the charm unspeakable
Which links in tender bands two faithful hearts?
In vain assailed by fortune's envious darts,
Their mitigated woes are sweetly shared,
And doubled joy reluctantly departs:
Let but the sympathizing heart be spared,
What sorrow seems not light, what peril is not dared?

Oh! never may suspicion's gloomy sky
Chill the sweet glow of fondly trusting love!
Nor ever may he feel the scowling eye
Of dark distrust his confidence reprove!
In pleasing error may I rather rove,
With blind reliance on the hand so dear,
Than let cold prudence from my eyes remove
Those sweet delusions, where nor doubt nor fear
Nor foul disloyalty nor cruel change appear.

The noble mind is ever prone to trust;
Yet love with fond anxiety is joined;
And timid tenderness is oft unjust;
The coldness which it dreads too prompt to find,
And torture the too susceptible mind.
Hence rose the gloom which oft o'er Psyche stole
Lest he she loved, unmindful or unkind,
Should careless slight affection's soft control,
Or she long absent lose her influence o'er his soul.

'Twas evening, and the shades which sudden fell
Seemed to forebode a dark unlovely night;
The sighing wood-nymphs from their caves foretel
The storm which soon their quiet shall affright;
Nor cheering star nor moon appears in sight,
Nor taper twinkles through the rustling leaves,
And sheds afar its hospitable light:
But hark! a dismal sound the ear receives,
And through the obscuring gloom the eye strange forms perceives.

It was a helpless female who exclaimed,
Whose blind and aged form an ass sustained:
Misshaped and timorous, of light ashamed,
In darksome woods her hard-earned food she gained,
And her voracious appetite maintained,
Though all-devouring, yet unsatisfied;
Nor aught of hard digestion she disdained,
Whate'er was offered greedily she tried,
And meanly served, as slave, whoever food supplied.

A cruel monster now her steps pursued,
Well known of yore, and named the Blatant Beast;
And soon he seized his prey with grasp so rude,
So fiercely on her feeble body prest,
That had the courteous Knight not soon released
Her unresisting limbs from violence,
She must have sunk by his rough jaws oppress:
The spiteful beast, enraged at the defence,
Now turned upon the knight with foaming vehemence.

But, when his fury felt the couched spear,
On Psyche's unarmed form he bellowing flew;
'Twas there alone the knight his rage could fear;
Swifter than thought his flaming sword he drew,
And from his hand the doubtful javelin threw,
Lest erring it might wound the trembling fair:
Eager the cruel monster to subdue,
He scorned to use his shield's protecting care,
And rashly left his side in part exposed and bare.

Sharp were the wounds of his avenging steel.
Which forced the roaring beast to quit the field:
Yet ere he fled, the knight unused to feel
The power of any foe, or e'er to yield
To any arm which sword or spear could wield,
Perceived the venom of his tooth impure:
But, with indignant silence, unrevealed
The pain he bore, while through the gloom obscure
The beast, in vain pursued, urged on his flight secure.

And now the hag, delivered from her fear,
Her grateful thanks upon her knight bestowed,
And, as they onward went, in Psyche's ear
Her tongue with many a horrid tale o'erflowed,
Which warned her to forsake that venturous road,
And seek protection in the neighbouring grove;
Where dwelt a prudent dame, who oft bestowed
Her sage advice, when pilgrims doomed to rove,
Benighted there, had else with lurking dangers strove.

The knight now softly bade his charge beware,
Nor trust Credulity, whom well he knew;
Yet he himself, harassed with pain and care,
And heedful of the storm which fiercer grew,
Yielded a path more sheltered to pursue:
Now soon entangled in a gloomy maze,
Psyche no longer has her knight in view,
Nor sees his page's star-crowned helmet blaze;
Close at her side alone the hag loquacious strays.

The sullen bell had told the midnight hour,
And sleep had laid the busy world to rest,
All but the watchful lady of the bower
And wretched Psyche: her distracted breast
The agony of sad suspense oppresst,
Now to the casement eagerly she flies,
And now the wished-for voice her fancy blest:
Alas the screaming night-bird only cries;
Only the drear obscure there meets her straining eyes.

Has thy heart sickened with deferred hope?
Or felt the impatient anguish of suspense?
Or hast thou tasted of the bitter cup
Which disappointment's withered hands dispense?
Thou knowest the poison which o'er flowedfrom hence
O'er Psyche's tedious, miserable hours.
The unheeded notes of plaintive Innocence
No longer soothe her soul with wonted powers,
Which false Disfida's tales her listening ear devours.

Of rapid torrents and deep marshy fens,
Of ambushed foes and unseen pits they tell,
Of ruffians rushing from their secret dens,
Of foul magicians and of wizard spell,
The poisoned lance and net invisible;
While Psyche shuddering sees her knight betrayed
Into the snares of some enchanter fell,
Beholds him bleeding in the treacherous shade,
Or hears his dying voice implore in vain for aid.

At length the cruel messengers return,
The trampling steeds sound welcome in her ear;
Her rapid feet the ground impatient spurn
As eagerly she flies their news to hear.
Alas! they bring no tidings which may cheer
Her sorrowing soul opprest, disconsolate!
"Dismiss," they cry, "each idly timid fear!
No dangers now thy faithless knight await,
Lured by a wanton fair to bowers of peaceful state.

"We saw him blithely follow where she led,
And urged him to return to thee in vain
Some other knight, insultingly he said,
Thy charms might soon for thy protection gain,
If still resolved to tread with weary pain
The tedious road to that uncertain land;
But he should there contentedly remain;
No other bliss could now his heart demand
Than that new lady's love and kindly proffered hand."

A while she stood in silent wonder lost,
And scarce believes the strange abandonment;
No fears like this her heart had ever crost,
Nor could she think his mind so lightly bent,
Could swerve so quickly from its first intent;
Till sudden bursting forth in angry mood
Disfida gave her indignation vent,
'Ah, well I know," she cried, "that wicked brood
Whose cursed ensnaring arts in vain my cares withstood.

Not thus Disfida suffered her to part,
But urged her there in safety to remain,
Repeating oft to her foreboding heart,
That fairy land she never could attain:
But when she saw dissuasion was in vain,
And Psyche bent her journey to pursue,
With angry brow she called a trusty train,
And bade them keep the imprudent fair in view,
And guard her dangerous path with strict observance true.

In vain their proffered service she declines,
And dreads the convoy of the scowling band;
Their hateful presence with her loss combines,
She feels betrayed to the destroyer's hand,
And trembling wanders o'er the dreary land;
While as she seeks to escape Disfida's power,
Her efforts still the officious guards withstand,
Led in vain circles many a tedious hour,
Undistanced still she sees the gloomy turrets lower.

Till, wearied with her fruitless way, at length
Upon the ground her fainting limbs she threw;
No wish remained to aid exhausted strength,
The mazy path she cared not to pursue,
Since unavailing was the task she knew:
Her murmuring guards to seek for food prepare,
Yet mindful of their charge, still keep in view
The drooping victim of their cruel care,
Who sees the day decline in terror and despair.

Hark! a low hollow groan she seems to hear
Repeated oft; wondering she looks around:
It seems to issue from some cavern near,
Or low hut hidden by the rising ground;
For, though it seemed the melancholy sound
Of human voice, no human form was nigh:
Her eye no human habitation found,
But as she listening gazed attentively,
Her shuddering ears received the deep and long-drawn sigh.

The guard who nearest stood now whispering said,
"If aught of doubt remain within thy mind,
Or wish to know why thus thou wert betrayed,
Or what strange cause thy faithless knight inclined
To leave the charge he with such scorn resigned,
Each curious thought thou now mayst satisfy,
Since here the entrance of a cave we find,
Where dwells, deep hid from day's too garish eye,
A sage whose magic spell can solve each mystery."

He staid not her reply, but urged her on
Reluctant to the dark and dreary cave;
No beam of cheerful Heaven had ever shone
In the recesses of that gloomy grave,
Where screaming owls their daily dwelling crave.
One sickly lamp the wretched Master shewed;
Devouring fiend! Who now the prey shall save
From his fell gripe, whose hands in blood imbrued,
In his own bosom seek his lacerated food?

On the damp ground he sits in sullen woe
But wildly rolls around his frenzied eye,
And gnaws his withered lips, which still o'erflow
With bitter gall; in foul disorder lie
His black and matted locks; anxiety
Sits on his wrinkled brow and sullen cheek;
The wasted form, the deep-drawn, frequent sigh,
Some slow-consuming malady bespeak,
But medicinal skill the cause in vain shall seek.

"Behold," the treacherous guard exclaimed,
"behold,
At length Disfida sends thy promised bride!
Let her, deserted by her knight, be told
What peerless lady lured him from her side;
Thy cares her future safety must provide."
Smiling maliciously as thus he spoke,
He seemed her helpless anguish to deride;
Then swiftly rushing from the den he broke,
Ere from the sudden shock astonished she awoke.

She too had fled; but when the wretch escaped
He closed the cavern's mouth with cruel care;
And now the monster placed his form mis-shaped
To bar the passage of the affrighted fair:
Her spirits die, she breathes polluted air,
And vaporous visions swim before her sight:
His magic skill the sorceror bids her share,
And lo! as in a glass, she sees her knight
In bower remembered well, the bower of loose Delight.

But oh! what words her feelings can impart!
Feelings to hateful envy near allied!
While on her knight her anxious glances dart:
His plumed helmet, lo! he lays aside;
His face with torturing agony she spied,
Yet cannot from the sight her eyes remove;
No mortal knight she sees had aid supplied,
No mortal knight in her defence had strove;
'Twas Love! 'twas Love himself, her own adored Love.

Poured in soft dalliance at a lady's feet,
In fondest rapture he appeared to lie,
While her fair neck with inclination sweet
Bent o'er his graceful form her melting eye,
Which his looked up to meet in ecstasy.
Their words she heard not; words had ne'er exprest
What well her sickening fancy could supply,
All that their silent eloquence confest,
As breathed the sigh of fire from each impassioned breast.

While thus she gazed, her quivering lips turn pale;
Contending passions rage within her breast
Nor ever had she known such bitter bale,
Or felt by such fierce agony opprest.
Oft had her gentle heart been sore distrest,
But meekness ever has a lenient power
From anguish half his keenest darts to wrest;
Meekness for her had softened Sorrow's hour,
Those furious fiends subdued which boisterous would devour.

For there are hearts that, like some sheltered lake,
Ne'er swell with rage, nor foam with violence;
Though its sweet placid calm the tempests shake,
Yet will it ne'er with furious impotence
Dash its rude waves against the rocky fence,
Which nature placed the limits of its reign:
Thrice blest! who feel the peace which flows from hence,
Whom meek-eyed Gentleness can thus restrain;
Whate'er the storms of fate with her let none complain!

That mild associate Psyche now deserts,
Unlovely passions agitate her soul,
The vile magician all his art exerts,
And triumphs to behold his proud control:
Changed to a serpent's hideous form, he stole
O'er her fair breast to suck her vital blood;
His poisonous involutions round her roll:
Already is his forked tongue imbrued
Warm in the stream of life, her heart's pure purple flood

Thus wretchedly she falls Geloso's prey!
But her, once more, unhoped for aid shall save!
Admitted shines the clear blue light of day
Upon the horrors of that gloomy grave;
Her knight's soft voice resounds through all the cave,
The affrighted serpent quits his deadly hold,
Nor dares the vengeance of his arm to brave,
Shrunk to a spider's form, while many a fold
Of self-spun web obscene the sorcerer vile enrolled.

Scarce had the star of his attendant youth
Blazed through the cavern and proclaimed the knight,
When all those spells and visions of untruth,
Bred in dark Erebus and nursed in night,
Dissolving vanished into vapour light;
While Psyche, quite exhausted by her pains,
And hardly trusting her astonish'd sight,
Now faint and speechless in his arms remains,
Nor memory of the past, nor present sense retains.

Borne from the cavern, and to life restored,
Her opening eyes behold her knight once more,
She sees whom lost with anguish she deplored;
Yet half-feigned resentment still she bore,
Nor sign of joy her face averted wore,
Though joy unuttered panted at her heart;
In sullen silence much she pondered o'er
What from her side induced him to depart,
And all she since had seen by aid of magic art.

Was it then all a false deluding dream
That wore the semblance of celestial Love?
On this her wavering thoughts bewildered seem
At length to rest; yet onward as they move,
Though much his tender cares her doubts reprove,
And though she longs to hear, and pardon all,
Silence she still preserves: a while he strove
Her free and cheerful spirits to recall,
But found the task was vain; his words unnoticed fall.

Now in his turn offended and surprised,
The knight in silence from her side withdrew;
With pain she marked it, but her pain disguised,
And heedless seemed her journey to pursue,
Nor backward deigned to turn one anxious view,
As oft she wished; till mindful of his lord,
Constance alarmed affectionately flew,
Eager to see their mutual peace restored,
And blamed her cold reserve in many a soft-breathed word.

"O Psyche! wound not thus thy faithful knight,
Who fondly sought thee many an anxious hour,
Though bleeding yet from that inglorious fight,
Where thou wert rescued from the savage power
Of that fell beast who would thy charms devour:
Still faint with wounds, he ceased not to pursue
Thy heedless course; let not displeasure lower
Thus on thy brow: think not his heart untrue!
Think not that e'er from thee he willingly withdrew."

With self-reproach and sweet returning trust,
While yet he spoke, her generous heart replies,
Soft melting pity bids her now be just,
And own the error which deceived her eyes;
Her little pride she longs to sacrifice,
And ask forgiveness of her suffering knight;
Her suffering knight, alas! no more she spies,
He has withdrawn offended from her sight,
Nor can that gentle voice now hope to stay his flight.

Struggling no more her sorrows to restrain,
Her streaming eyes look round with anxious fear;
Nor are those tender showers now shed in vain,
Her soft lamenting voice has reached his ear,
Where latent he had marked each precious tear;
Sudden as thought behold him at her feet!
Oh! reconciling moment! charm most dear!
What feeling heart thy pleasures would repeat,
Or wish thy dearly purchased bliss, however sweet?

The smiles of joy which swell her glowing cheek,
And o'er her parting lips divinely play,
Returning pleasure eloquently speak,
Forgetful of the tears which lingering stay,
(Like sparkling dew-drops in a sunny day,)
Unheeded tenants of rejoicing eyes;
His wounds her tender care can well repay:
Their grateful kindness breathes her balmy sighs,
Beneath her lenient hand how swiftly suffering flies.

Freed from the mazes of Disfida's groves,
The opening landscape brightens to their view;
Psyche, with strength revived, now onwards moves
In cheerful hope, with courage to renew
Repeated toils, and perils to pursue:
Thus when some tender plant neglected pines,
Shed o'er its pendent head the kindly dew,
How soon refreshed its vivid lustre shines!
Once more the leaf expands, the drooping tendril twines.

Thus cheered, the knight entreats her to impart
The dangers which her way had since befel,
Her timid lips refuse to speak the art
Which clothed him in a form she loved so well:
That she had thought him Love, she blushed to tell!
Confused she stopt; a gentle pause ensued;
What chance had brought him to the demon's cell
She then enquires; what course he had pusued,
And who his steps had led throughout the mazy wood?

Sooth he had much to say, though modest shame
His gallant deeds forbade him to declare;
For while through those bewildering woods he came,
Assisted by his page's active care,
He had detected Varia's wily snare,
And forced her wanton retinue to flee.
With like disgrace, malignant in despair,
Disfida's slaves their plots defeated see,
Their feeble malice scorned, their destined victims free.

But he had marked the traces of their feet,
And found the path which to the cavern led:
Whence now, rejoicing in reunion sweet,
Their way together cheerfully they tread,
Exempt awhile from danger and from dread;
While Psyche's heart, with confidence more bold,
Full oft the hour of rapture pictured,
When those celestial charms he should behold,
And feel the arms of Love once more his bride enfold.

CANTO V.

ARGUMENT.

Introduction—Charm of Poetry—Psyche beholds Palace of Chastity—Pleads for the admission of her Kni —Obtains it through the intervention of Hymen—Hym celebrating the triumphs of Chastity—Psyche, enraptur desires to devote herself solely to the service of Chastity Entrusted by her to the protection of the Knight—Psych Voyage—Tempest—Coast of Spleen—Psyche received a sheltered by Patience.

PSYCHE.

CANTO V.

Delightful visions of my lonely hours!
Charm of my life and solace of my care!
O! would the muse but lend proportioned powers,
And give me language, equal to declare
The wonders which she bids my fancy share,
When rapt in her to other worlds I fly,
See angel forms unutterably fair,
And hear the inexpressive harmony
That seems to float on air, and warble through the sky.

Might I the swiftly glancing scenes recal!
Bright as the roseate clouds of summer's eve,
The dreams which hold my soul in willing thrall,
And half my visionary days deceive,
Communicable shape might then receive,
And other hearts be ravished with the strain:
But scarce I seek the airy threads to weave,
When quick confusion mocks the fruitless pain,
And all the fairy forms are vanished from my brain.

Fond dreamer! meditate thine idle song!
But let thine idle song remain unknown;
The verse, which cheers thy solitude, prolong
What, though it charm no moments but thine own,
Though thy loved Psyche smiles for thee alone,
Still shall it yield thee pleasure, if not fame,
And when, escaped from tumult, thou hast flown
To thy dear silent hearth's enlivening flame,
There shall the tranquil muse her happy votary claim!

My Psyche's wanderings then she loves to trace;
Unrols the glowing canvas to my sight;
Her chaste calm eye, her soft attractive grace,
The lightning of her heavenly smile so bright,
All yield me strange and unconceived delight:
Even now entranced her journey I pursue,
And gaze enraptured on her matchless knight;
Visions of love, pure, innocent, and true!
Oh! may your graceful forms for ever bless my view!

See as they tread the green, soft-levelled plain,
Where never weed, nor noxious plant was found!
Psyche, enchanted, bids her knight explain
Who rules that lovely and well-cultured ground,
Where fairest flowers and purest springs abound
"Oh! object of my anxious cares," (he cried,
As with a half-breathed sigh he gazed around,)
"A stranger here, full oft I vainly tried
Admittance to obtain, and soothe the sovereign's pride.

" Here Castabella reigns, whose brow severe
Oft chilled my sanguine spirit by its frown;
Yet have I served her with adoring fear,
Though her ungrateful scorn will oft disown
The faithful homage by her servant shown;
Me she hath banished from her fair domain,
For crimes my loyal heart had never known;
While thus excluded vainly I complain,
And feel another's guilt my injured honour stain.

" With false assumption of my arms and name,
Knight of the Bleeding Heart miscalled too long,
A vile impostor has disgraced my fame,
And much usurped by violence and wrong,
Which to the virgin queen by right belong;
On me her irritated vengeance falls,
On me, repulsed by force of arms so strong
That, never suffered to approach her walls,
Unheard, indignant Truth in vain for justice calls.

" Yet she alone our progress can assist,
And thou, Oh, Psyche! must her favour gain;
Nor from thy soft entreaties e'er desist
Till thou free entrance for thy knight obtain;
Here let his faithful services remain
Fixed on thy grateful heart! nor thou consent,
Nor let their force thy gentleness constrain
To leave him, thus disgraced, yet innocent,
Thine undeserved neglect forsaken to lament."

While yet he speaks, before her ravished eyes
The brilliant towers of Castabella shine:
The sun that views them from unclouded skies
Sheds not through heaven a radiance more divine:
The adamantine walls with strength combine
Inimitable lustre ever clear;
Celestial temple! 'tis not lips like mine
Thy glories can reveal to mortal ear,
Or paint the unsullied beams which blaze for ever here.

Approaching now the well-defended gates,
Which placed at distance guard the sacred fane,
Their lowly suit a stern repulse awaits;
The timid voice of Psyche pleads in vain,
Nor entrance there together can they gain;
While yet they stay, unwilling to retreat,
The dove, swift-sailing through the etherial plain,
Has reached already Castabella's seat,
And in her spotless breast has found a welcome sweet.

Caressing oft her well-remembered guest,
Screner smiles illumed her softened brow;
The heaven-sent messenger her soul confest,
And mildly listened to his murmurs low,
Which seemed in pleading eloquence to flow;
His snowy pinions then he wide displayed,
And gently lured her from her throne to go
Even to the gates, where Psyche blushing stayed
Beside her awe-struck knight half doubtingly afraid.

That form majestic might the bravest awe:
Yet Psyche gazed with love unmixed with fear,
And felt those charms her soul attracted draw
As to maternal tenderness most dear;
Congenial souls! they at one glance appear
Linked to each other by a mutual tie:
Her courteous voice invites her to draw near,
And lo! obedient to the sovereign's eye,
To Psyche's willing steps the barriers open fly.

But to the lion, and his gallant lord,
Sudden the affrighted guards the portals close.
Psyche looks back, and mindful of her word,
Mindful of him who saved her from her foes,
Guide of her course and soother of her woes,
The tear that startled to her downcast eye,
The deepening blush which eloquently rose,
Silent assistant of the pleading sigh,
To speed the unuttered suit their powers persuasive try.

And now the knight, encouraged to approach,
Asserts his injured fame, and justice claims,
Confutes each charge, repels each foul reproach,
And each accusing falsehood boldly shames,
While conscious Innocence his tongue inflames
A firm attachment to her reign he vows,
The base impostor's guilty madness blames,
And, while the imputed crimes his spirit rouse,
No intercourse with him his nobler soul allows.

Mean time his faihtful page had not been mute
And he had found a ready warm ally;
For (while his master urged the eager suit)
As through the goodly train he cast his eye,
He chanced exulting 'mid the group to spy
A joyous youth, his fondly-cherished friend;
Hymen, the festive, love-attending boy,
Delighted his assistance hastes to lend,
Laughing, unbars the gates, and bids the parl
end.

Around their queen the timid virgins crowd,
Who half-consentingly receives the knight,
And checks her sportive boy, whose welcome loud
Speaks his gay triumph and his proud delight:
Yet graceful smiles her happy guests invite
To share the feast with sacred honours blest;
The palace opens to their dazzled sight;
Still as they gazed, the adoring eye confest,
That wondering awe which filled each consecrated
breast.

All was divine, yet still the fairest queen
Like Dian 'mid her circling nymphs appeared,
Or as Minerva on Parnassus seen,
When condescendingly with smiles she cheered
The silent Muses who her presence feared:
A starry crown its heavenly radiance threw
O'er her pale cheek; for there the rose revered
The purer lilies of her saint-like hue,
Yet oft the mantling blush its transient visits knew.

The hand of Fate, which wove of spotless white
Her wonderous robe, bade it unchangeable
Preserve unsullied its first lustre bright,
Nor e'er might be renewed that sacred spell
If once destroyed; wherefore to guard it well
Two hand-maids she entrusts with special care,
Prudence and Purity, who both excel,
The first in matron dignity of air,
The last in blooming youth unalterably fair.

Favourite of heaven! she at her birth received
With it the brilliant zone that bound her waist,
Which, were the earth of sun and stars bereaved,
By its own light beneficently cast
Could cheer the innocent, and guide the chaste;
Nor armour ever had the virgin bore,
Though oft in warlike scenes her youth she past,
For while her breast this dazzling cestus wore,
The foe who dared to gaze beheld the light no more.

But when her placid hours in peace are spent,
Concealed she bids its latent terrors lie,
Sheathed in a silken scarf, with kind intent
Wove by the gentle hand of Modesty;
And see, the blushing maid with down-cast eye
Behind her mistress hides her charms retired!
While foremost of the group, of stature high,
Firm Courage lifts her brow by truth inspired,
Who holds a crystal lamp in flames celestial fired.

See, fresh as Hebe, blooming Temperance stand,
Present the nectared fruits, and crown the bowl!
While bright-eyed Honour leads the choral band,
Whose songs divine can animate the soul,
Led willing captive to their high control:
They sing the triumphs of their spotless queen,
And proudly bid immortal fame enrol
Upon her fairest page such as have been
The champions of her cause, the favourites of her reign.

From Pallas first begins the lofty song,
And Cynthia, brightest goddess of the skies;
To her the virgin deities belong,
And each beholds her with a sister's eyes;
The mystic honours next of Fauna rise;
Her solemn rites which purest hands require;
And Vesta, who her virgins taught to prize,
And guard the sacred symbols of the fire
Which earth could ne'er revive if suffered to expire.

Emblem divine of female purity!
Whose trust betrayed to like sad fate shall doom;
Pursued by scorn, consigned to infamy,
The hapless victims perish in their bloom
'Mid the dark horrors of a living tomb;
Effulgent queen! thou wilt the pure defend
From the dark night of this opprobrious gloom;
Nor even with life thy favouring smiles shall end,
They bid illustrious fame beyond the grave extend.

First of the noble youths whose virtue shone
Conspicuous chief in Castabella's train,
They sing the firm unmoved Bellerophon;
And Peleus flying the Magnesian plain,
Pursued by all a wanton's fierce disdain.
You too, Hippolytus, their songs employ!
Beloved by Phædra, but beloved in vain;
With the chaste honours of the Hebrew boy,
Which time shall ne'er obscure, nor idle scorn destroy.

Nor was unsung whom on Hymettus' brow
The bright Aurora wooed with amorous care:
He, mindful of his sacred nuptial vow,
Refused the goddess though celestial fair,
Breathing pure perfumes and embrosial air:
Of wanton Circe's baffled arts they tell,
And him, too wise her treacherous cup to share,
Who scorned the enchantress, and her mystic spell,
And all the Syrens' arts could gloriously repel.

The long-tried virtue of his faithful spouse
Now sweetly animates the tuneful string,
Unsullied guardian of her virgin vows!
Who twice ten years had wept her wandering king.
Acastus' mourning daughter next they sing;
The chaste embrace which clasped her husband's shade:
And thee, Dictynna! who, with daring spring,
Called from the Creton rock on Dian's aid:
And still the goddess loves her favourite luckless *maid.*

Pleased to assume herself a name so dear,
She bids her altars to Dictynna rise,
Thus called, she ever turns, with willing ear,
To aid each nymph who for her succour cries.
See how the trembling Arethusa flies
Through pathless woods, o'er rocks and open plains;
In vain to escape the ravisher she tries,
Fast on her rapid flight Alpheus gains,
And scarce her fainting strength the unequal course sustains.

And now more near his dreaded step she hears,
His lengthened shadow flies before her feet,
Now o'er her neck his panting breath appears
To part her locks, which, in disorder sweet,
Ambitious seemed to fan the fervid heat
That flushed her glowing cheek and heightened charms:
Hear how her gasping sighs for aid entreat!
"Dictynna! pitying see my just alarms,
And snatch thy fainting maid from those polluting arms."

The goddess hears, and in a favouring cloud
Conceals her suppliant from Alpheus' sight;
In vain he looks around, and calls aloud,
And wondering seeks the traces of her flight:
Enveloped still she views him with affright,
An icy coldness creeps o'er all her frame,
And soon, dissolving in a current bright,
The silver stream retains her honoured name,
And still unmingled flows, and guards its virgin fame

'Twas thus Castalia's sacred fountain sprung,
Once a fair nymph by bright Apollo loved:
To Daphne too his amorous strain he sung,
But sung in vain: her heart remained unmoved,
No vain delight her modest virtue proved
To be the theme of all his wanton lays;
To shun the god the silvan scene she roved;
Nor prized the flattery of his tuneful praise,
Nor one relenting smile his splendid gifts could raise.

Yet were his lips with eloquence endued,
And melting passion warbled o'er his lyre,
And as she yielding listened as he wooed,
The virgin sure had caught the kindling fire,
And fallen a victim to impure desire;
For safety cautious flight alone remained,
While tears of trembling innocence require
Her parents' aid: and lo, that aid obtained,
How suddenly her charms immortal laurels gained!

Dear to the Muses still her honours live:
And they too glory in their virgin name;
To pure delights their tranquil hours they give,
And fear to mingle with a grosser flame
The chaster fires which heaven hath bid them claim:
They smiled when Pan, on Ladon's banks deceived,
The fair Syringa clasped, who, snatched from shame,
Already had her tuneful form received,
And to the breathing winds in airy music grieved.

Still in that tuneful form to Dian dear
She bids it injured Innocence befriend;
Commands her train the sentence to revere,
And in her grove the vocal reeds suspend
Which Virtue may from calumny defend:
Self-breathed, when virgin purity appears,
What notes melodious they spontaneous send!
While the rash guilty nymph with horror hears
Deep groans declare her shame to awe-struck wonde
ing ears.

The spotless virgins shall unhurt approach
The stream's rude ordeal, and the sacred fire
See the pure maid, indignant of reproach,
The dreadful test of innocence require
Amid the holy priests and virgin choir!
See her leap fearless on the blazing shrine!
The lambent flames, bright-circling, all aspire
Innoxious wreaths around her form to twine,
And crown with lustrous beams the virgin's brow
divine.

Nor was the daring Clusia then unsung,
Who plunged illustrious from the lofty tower;
The favouring winds around the virgin clung,
And bore her harmless from the tyrant's power:
For those, whom Vesta in the trying hour
Protects from slander, and restores to fame;
Nor Clelia, shielded from the arrowy shower;
Nor thou! whose purest hands the Sibyls claim,
And bid the modest fane revere Sulpicia's name.

O'er her soft cheek how arch the dimples play,
While pleased the goddess hears Sinope's wiles!
How oft she mock'd the changeful lord of day,
And many a silvan god who sought her smiles:
But chief when Jove her innocence beguiles;
"Grant me a boon," the blushing maid replies,
Urged by his suit: hope o'er his amorous toils
Exulting draws:—"Thine oath is past," she cries;
"Unalterably pure thy spotless virgin dies!"

Rome shall for ages boast Lucretia's name!
And while its temples moulder into dust
Still triumph in Virginia's rescued fame,
And Scipio's victory over baffled lust:—
Even now the strain prophetically just,
In unborn servants bids their queen rejoice,
And in her British beauties firmly trust:
Thrice happy fair! who still adore her voice,
The blushing virgin's law, the modest matron's choice!

Psyche with ravished ear the strain attends,
Enraptured hangs upon the heaven-strung lyre;
Her kindling soul from sensual earth ascends:
To joys divine her purer thoughts aspire;
She longs to join the white-robed spotless choir,
And there for ever dwell a hallowed guest:
Even Love himself no longer can inspire
The wishes of the soft enthusiast's breast,
Who, filled with sacred zeal, would there for ever rest.

Despising every meaner low pursuit,
And quite forgetful of her amorous care,
All heedless of her knight, who sad and mute
With wonder hears the strange ungrateful fair,
A prostrate suppliant, pour the fervent prayer
To be received in Castabella's train,
And that in tranquil bliss secluded there,
Her happy votary still she might remain,
Free from each worldly care, and each polluting stain.

With gracious smile the Queen her favourite heard,
And fondly raised, and clasped her to her breast;
A beam of triumph in her eye appeared,
While ardent Psyche offered her request,
Which to the indignant knight her pride confest:
"Farewell, mistaken Psyche!" he exclaims,
Rising at length with grief and shame opprest,
"Since thy false heart a spouse divine disclaims,
I leave thee to the pomp which here thy pride inflames."

"Yet stay, impetuous youth," the Queen replies,
Abashed, irresolute as Psyche stands,
"My favourite's happiness too dear I prize,
For other services my soul demands
Than those which here in these sequestered lands
Her zeal would pay: no, let her bear my fame
Even to the bowers where Love himself commands:
There shall my votary to [illegible] from blame,
And teach all my rule proves to prove to my name.

" My lovely servant still defend from harms,
And stem with her yon strong opposing tide:
Haste, bear her safely to her lover's arms!
Be it thy care with steady course to guide
The light-winged bark I will myself provide.
Depart in peace! thou chosen of my heart!
Leave not thy faithful knight's protecting side.
Dear to me both, oh may no treacherous art
Your kindred souls divide, your fair alliance part!

" Here rest to-night! to-morrow shall prepare
The vessel which your destined course shall speed.
Lo! I consign my Psyche to thy care,
O gallant youth! for so hath Fate decreed,
And Love himself shall pay the generous meed."
She said, and joined their unreluctant hands.
The grateful knight, from fear and sorrow freed,
Receives with hope revived the dear commands,
And Psyche's modest eye no other law demands.

Now Peace, with downy step and silent hand,
Prepares for each the couch of soft repose:
Fairest attendant! she with whispers bland
Bids the obedient eye in slumbers close;
She too the first at early morning goes
With light-foot Cheerfulness the guests to greet,
Who, soothed by quiet dreams, refreshed arose,
Ready the labours of the day to meet;
But *first due homage* pay at Castabella's feet.

Bright was the prospect which before them shone:
Gay danced the sun-beams o'er the trembling waves:
Who that the faithless ocean had not known,
Which now the strand in placid whispers laves,
Could e'er believe the rage with which it raves
When angry Boreas bids the storm arise,
And calls his wild winds from their wintry caves?
Now soft Favonius breathes his gentlest sighs,
Auspicious omens wait, serenely smiles the skies.

The eager mariners now seize the oar,
The streamers flutter in the favouring gale.
Nor unattended did they leave the shore:
Hymen, whose smiles shall o'er mischance prevail,
Sits at the helm, or spreads the swelling sail:
Swift through the parting waves the vessel flies,
And now at distance scarce can Psyche hail
The shore so fast receding from her eyes,
Or bless the snowy cliffs which o'er the coast arise.

Pleased with her voyage and the novel scene,
Hope's vivid ray her cheerful heart expands:
Delighted now she eyes the blue serene,
The purple hills, and distant rising lands,
Or, when the sky the silver queen commands,
In pleasing silence listens to the oar
Dashed by the frequent stroke of equal hands;
Or asks her knight if yet the promised shore
May bless her longing eyes when morn shall light restore?

The impatient question oft repeated thus
He smiling hears, and still with many a tale,
Or song of heavenly lore unknown to us
Beguiles the live-long night, or flagging sail,
When the fresh breeze begins their bark to fail.
Strong ran the tide against the vessel's course,
And much they need the kind propitious gale
Steady to bear against its rapid force,
And aid the labouring oars, their tedious last resource.

But lo! the blackening surface of the deep
With sullen murmurs now begins to swell,
On ruffled wing the screaming sea-fowl sweep
The unlovely surge, and piteous seem to tell
How from the low-hung clouds with fury fell
The demons of the tempest threatening rage;
There, brooding future terrors, yet they dwell,
Till with collected force dread war they wage,
And in convulsive gusts the adverse winds engage.

The trembling Psyche, supplicating Heaven,
Lifts to the storm her fate-deploring eye,
Sees o'er her head the livid lightnings driven:
Then, turned in horror from the blazing sky,
Clings to her knight in speechless agony:
He all his force exerts the bark to steer,
And bids the mariners each effort try,
To escape the rocky coast which threatens near,
For Hymen taught the youth that dangerous shore to fear.

Who has not listened to his tuneful lay,
That sings so well the hateful cave of Spleen
Those lands, submitted to her gloomy sway,
Now open to their view a dreary scene.
As the sad subjects of the sullen queen
Hang o'er the cliffs, and blacken all the strand;
And where the entrance of the cave is seen
A peevish, fretful, melancholy band,
Her ever wrangling slaves, in jarring concert stand.

Driven by the hurricane they touch the shore,
The frowning guards prepare to seize their prey,
The knight (attentive to the helm no more,
Resumes his arms, and bids his shield display
Its brilliant orb: "Psyche, let no dismay
Possess thy gentle breast," he cheerly cries,
Behind thy knight in fearless safety stay,
Smile at the dart which o'er thee vainly flies,
Secure from each attack their powerless rage despise.

"Soon shall the fury of the winds be past,
Serener skies shall brighten to our view,
Let us not yield to the imperious blast
Which now forbids our vessel to pursue
Its purposed course; soon shall the heavens renew
Their calm clear smile; and soon our coward foes,
Despairing thus our courage to subdue,
Shall cease their idle weapons to oppose,
And unmolested Peace restore our lost repose."

Still as he spoke, where'er he turned his shield
The darts drop quivering from each slackened bow,
Unnerved each arm, no force remains to wield
The weighty falchion, or the javelin throw;
Each voice half choked expires in murmurs low,
A dizzy mist obscures their wondering sight,
Their eyes no more their wonted fury know,
With stupid awe they gaze upon the knight,
Or, as his voice they hear, trembling disperse in flight.

Yet raged the storm with unabated power:
A little creek the labouring vessel gains;
There they resolve to endure the blustering hour,
The dashing billows, and the beating rains.
Soon as the bark the sheltering bay attains,
And in the shallows moored securely rides,
Attentive still to soften all her pains,
The watchful knight for Psyche's ease provides;
Some fisher's hut perchance the shelving harbour hides.

Deep in the sterile bank a grotto stood,
Whose winding caves repel the inclement air,
Worn in the hollowed rock by many a flood
And sounding surge that dashed its white foam there,
The refuge now of a defenceless fair,
Who issuing thence, with courteous kind intent
Approached the knight, and kindly bade him share
Whatever good indulgent heaven had lent
To cheer her hapless years in lonely suffering spent.

More sweet than Health's fresh bloom th
seemed
Which sat upon her pallid cheek; her eye,
Her placid eye, with dove-like softness be
Her head unshielded from the pitiless sky,
Loose to the rude wild blast her tresses fl
Bare were her feet which pressed the shell
With firm unshrinking step; while smilin
She eyes the dashing billows as they roar,
And braves the boisterous storms so oft
before.

Long had she there in silent sorrow dwelt,
And many a year resigned to grief had kn
Spleen's cruel insolence she oft had felt,
But never would the haughty tyrant own,
Nor heed the darts which, from a distance
Screened by her cavern she could safely sh
The thorny brakes she trod for food alone,
Drank the cold stream which near the gro
And bore the winter's frosts and scorching sum

In early youth, exchanging mutual vows,
Courage had wooed and won his lovely bri

When the vexed seas their stormy mountains roll,
She loves the shipwrecked mariner to cheer;
The trembling wretch escaped from Spleen's control,
Deep in her silent cell conceals his fear,
And panting finds repose and refuge here;
Benevolently skilled each wound to heal,
To her the sufferer flies, with willing ear
She wooes them all their anguish to reveal,
And while she speaks, they half forget the woes they feel.

Now to her cave has Patience gently brought
Psyche, yet shuddering at the fearful blast,
Largely she heaped with hospitable thought
The blazing pile, and spread the pure repast;
O'er her chilled form her own soft mantle cast,
And soothed her wearied spirits to repose,
Till all the fury of the storm is past,
Till swift receding clouds the heavens disclose,
And o'er subsiding waves pacific sunshine glows.

CANTO VI.

ARGUMENT.

Introduction—The power of Love to soften Adversity—Exhortation to guard Love from the Attacks of Ill-temper, which conduct to Indifference and Disgust—Psyche becalmed—Psyche surprised and carried to the Island of Indifference—Pursued and rescued by her Knight—The Voyage concluded—Psyche brought home beholds again the Temple of Love—Is reunited to her Lover, and invited by Venus to receive in Heaven her Apotheosis—Conclusion.

PSYCHE.

CANTO VI.

When pleasure sparkles in the cup of youth,
And the gay hours on downy wing advance,
Oh! then 'tis sweet to hear the lip of Truth
Breathe the soft vows of love, sweet to entrance
The raptured soul by intermingling glance
Of mutual bliss; sweet amid roseate bowers,
Led by the hand of Love, to weave the dance,
Or unmolested crop life's fairy flowers,
Or bask in joy's bright sun through calm unclouded hours.

Yet they, who light of heart in May-day pride
Meet love with smiles and gaily amorous song,
(Though he their softest pleasures may provide,
Even then when pleasures in full concert throng,)
They cannot know with what enchantment strong
He steals upon the tender suffering soul,
What gently soothing charms to him belong,
How melting sorrow owns his soft control,
Subsiding passions hushed in milder waves to roll.

When vexed by cares and harassed by distress,
The storms of fortune chill thy soul with dread,
Let Love, consoling Love! still sweetly bless,
And his assuasive balm benignly shed:
His downy plumage o'er thy pillow spread,
Shall lull thy weeping sorrows to repose;
To Love the tender heart hath ever fled,
As on its mother's breast the infant throws
Its sobbing face, and there in sleep forgets its woes.

Oh! fondly cherish then the lovely plant,
Which lenient Heaven hath given thy pains to ease;
Its lustre shall thy summer hours enchant,
And load with fragrance every prosperous breeze,
And when rude Winter shall thy roses seize,
When nought through all thy bowers but thorns remain,
This still with undeciduous charms shall please,
Screen from the blast and shelter from the rain,
And still with verdure cheer the desolated plain.

Through the hard season Love with plaintive note
Like the kind redbreast tenderly shall sing,
Which swells 'mid dreary snows its tuneful throat,
Brushing the cold dews from its shivering wing,
With cheerful promise of returning spring
To the mute tenants of the leafless grove.
Guard thy best treasure from the venomed sting
Of baneful peevishness; oh! never prove
How soon ill-temper's power can banish gentle Love

Repentance may the storms of passion chase,
And Love, who shrunk affrighted from the blast,
May hush his just complaints in soft embrace,
And smiling wipe his tearful eye at last:
Yet when the wind's rude violence is past,
Look what a wreck the scattered fields display!
See on the ground the withering blossoms cast!
And hear sad Philomel with piteous lay
Deplore the tempest's rage that swept her young away.

The tears capricious Beauty loves to shed,
The pouting lip, the sullen silent tongue,
May wake the impassioned lover's tender dread,
And touch the spring that clasps his soul so strong;
But, ah, beware! the gentle power too long
Will not endure the frown of angry strife;
He shuns contention, and the gloomy throng
Who blast the joys of calm domestic life,
And flies when Discord shakes her brand with quarrels rife.

Oh! he will tell you that these quarrels bring
The ruin, not renewal of his flame:
If oft repeated, lo! on rapid wing
He flies to hide his fair but tender frame;
From violence, reproach, or peevish blame
Irrevocably flies. Lament in vain!
Indifference comes the abandoned heart to claim,
Asserts for ever her repulsive reign,
Close followed by Disgust and all her chilling train.

Indifference, dreaded power! what art shall save
The good so cherished from thy grasping hand?
How shall young Love escape the untimely grave
Thy treacherous arts prepare? or how withstand
The insidious foe, who with her leaden band
Enchains the thoughtless, slumbering deity?
Ah, never more to wake! or e'er expand
His golden pinions to the breezy sky,
Or open to the sun his dim and languid eye.

Who can describe the hopeless, silent pang
With which the gentle heart first marks her sway?
Eyes the sure progress of her icy fang
Resistless, slowly fastening on her prey;
Sees rapture's brilliant colours fade away,
And all the glow of beaming sympathy;
Anxious to watch the cold averted ray
That speaks no more to the fond meeting eye
Enchanting tales of love, and tenderness, and joy.

Too faithful heart! thou never canst retrieve
Thy withered hopes: conceal the cruel pain!
O'er thy lost treasure still in silence grieve;
But never to the unfeeling ear complain:
From fruitless struggles dearly bought refrain!
Submit at once—the bitter task resign,
Nor watch and fan the expiring flame in vain;
Patience, consoling maid, may yet be thine,
Go seek her quiet cell, and hear her voice divine!

But, lo! the joyous sun, the soft-breathed gales
By zephyrs sent to kiss the placid seas,
Curl the green wave, and fill the swelling sails;
The seamen's shouts, which jocund hail the breeze,
Call the glad knight the favouring hour to seize.
Her gentle hostess Psyche oft embraced,
Who still solicitous her guest to please,
On her fair breast a talisman had placed,
And with the valued gem her parting blessing graced.

How gaily now the bark pursues its way
Urged by the steady gale! while round the keel
The bubbling currents in sweet whispers play,
Their force repulsive now no more they feel;
No clouds the unsullied face of heaven conceal,
But the clear azure one pure dome displays,
Whether it bids the star of day reveal
His potent beams, or Cynthia's milder rays
On deep cerulean skies invite the eye to gaze.

Almost unconscious they their course pursue,
So smooth the vessel cuts the watery plain;
The wide horizon to their boundless view
Gives but the sky, and Neptune's ample reign:
Still the unruffled bosom of the main
Smiles undiversified by varying wind;
No toil the idle mariners sustain,
While, listless, slumbering o'er his charge reclined,
The pilot cares no more the unerring helm to wind.

With light exulting heart glad Psyche sees
Their rapid progress as they quit the shore:
Yet weary languor steals by slow degrees
Upon her tranquil mind; she joys no more
The never-changing scene to wander o'er
With still admiring eye; the enchanting song
Yields not that lively charm it knew before,
When first enraptured by his tuneful tongue
She bad her vocal knight the heavenly strain prolong.

A damp chill mist now deadens all the air,
A drowsy dulness seems o'er all to creep,
No more the heavens their smile of brightness wear,
The winds are hushed, while the dim glassy deep
Oppressed by sluggish vapours seems to sleep;
See his light scarf the knight o'er Psyche throws,
Solicitous his lovely charge to keep
From still increasing cold; while deep repose
Benumbs each torpid sense, and bids her eye-lids close.

Now as with languid stroke they ply the oars,
While the dense fog obscures their gloomy way;
Hymen, well used to coast these dangerous shores,
Roused from the dreaming trance in which he lay,
Cries to the knight in voice of dread dismay,
"Steer hence thy bark, oh! yet in time beware;
Here lies Petrea, which with baneful sway
Glacella rules, I feel the dank cold air,
I hear her chilling voice, methinks it speaks despair!"

Even while he speaks, behold the vessel stands
Immovable! in vain the pilot tries
The helm to turn; fixed in the shallow strands,
No more obedient to his hand, it lies,
The disappointed oar no aid supplies
While sweeping o'er the sand it mocks their force.
The anxious knight to Constance now applies,
To his oft-tried assistance has recourse,
And bids his active mind design some swift resource.

Debating doubtfully awhile they stood,
At length on their united strength rely,
To force the bark on the supporting flood;
They rouse the seamen, who half slumbering lie,
Subdued and loaded by the oppressive sky.
Then wading 'mid the fog, with care explore
What side the deepest waters may supply,
And where the shallows least protect the shore,
While through their darksome search the star sheds light before.

Mean time deep slumbers of the vaporous mist
Hang on the heavy eye-lids of the fair;
And Hymen too, unable to resist
The drowsy force of the o'erwhelming air,
Laid at her feet at length forgets his care.
When lo! Glacella's treacherous slaves advance,
Deep wrapt in thickest gloom; the sleeping fair
They seize, and bear away in heedless trance,
Long ere her guardian knight suspects the bitter chance.

Thus the lorn traveller imprudent
Where his high glaciers proud Lo
Thus o'er his limbs resistless torp
As yielding to the fatal deep repo
He sinks benumbed upon the Alp
And sleeps no more to wake; no r
The blooming scenes his native va
Or ever more the craggy path pur
Or o'er the lichened steep the chamo

Lo! to their queen they bear their
Deep in her ice-built castle's gloo
There on a pompous couch they g
Psyche, as yet unconscious of her
And when her heavy eyes half ope
Dimly observe the strange and unk
As in a dream she views her chang
Gazing around with doubtful, trout
Now on the stupid crowd, now on
queen.

With vacant smile, and words but
In one ungracious never-varying to
Glacella welcomes her bewildered
And bids the chief supporter of he
Approach and make their mighty r

Nought of his shapeless form to sight appears,
Impenetrable furs conceal each part;
Harsh and unpleasing sounds in Psyche's ears
That voice which had subdued full many a heart;
While he, exerting every specious art,
Persuades her to adore their queen's control;
Yet would he not Glacella's name impart,
But with false title which she artful stole
From fair Philosophy, deludes the erring soul.

"Rest, happy fair," he cries, "who here hast found
From all the storms of life a safe retreat,
Sorrow thy breast henceforth no more shall wound,
Nor Care invade thee in this quiet seat;
The voice of the distrest no more shall meet
The sympathizing ear; another's woes
Shall never interrupt the stillness sweet
Which here shall hush thee to serene repose,
Nor damp the constant joys these scenes for thee disclose.

"Fatigue no more thy soft and lovely frame
With vain benevolence and fruitless care;
No deep-heaved sigh shall here thy pity claim,
Nor hateful Want demand thy wealth to share;
For thee shall Independence still prepare
Pleasures unmingled, and for ever sure;
His lips our sovereign's peaceful laws declare,
Centre existence in thyself secure,
Nor let an alien shade thy sunshine e'er obscure."

He spoke, and lo! unnumbered doors unfold,
And various scenes of revelry display;
Here Grandeur sunk beneath the massive gold;
Here discontented Beauty pined away,
And vainly conscious asked her promised sway;
Here Luxury prepared his sumptuous feast,
While lurking Apathy behind him lay
To poison all the insipid food he drest,
And shake his poppy crown o'er every sated guest.

The hireling minstrels strike their weary lyre,
And slumber o'er the oft-repeated strain;
No listless youth to active grace they fire:
Here Eloquence herself might plead in vain,
Nor one of all the heartless crowd could gain:
And thou, oh! sweeter than the Muses' song,
Affection's voice divine! with cold disdain
Even thou art heard, while 'mid the insulting throng
Thy daunted, shivering form moves timidly along!

Thus o'er the oiled surface softly slides
The unadmitted stream, rapid it flows,
And from the impervious plain pellucid glides;
Repulsed with gentle murmurs thus it goes,
Till in the porous earth it finds repose,
Concealed and shelter'd in its parent's breast:—
Oh! man's best treasure in this vale of woes!
Still cheer the sad, and comfort the distrest,
Nor ever be thy voice by selfishness oppress'd!

Psyche with languid step he leads around,
And bids her all the castle's splendour see.
Here Dissipation's constant sports abound,
While her loose hand in seeming bounty free,
Her scentless roses, painted mimicry,
Profusely sheds; here Pride unheeded tells
To nodding crowds his ancient pedigree;
And Folly with reiterated spells
To count her spotted cards the yawning group compels.

"See how, attentive to her subjects' ease,"
To their reluctant prey exclaims her guide,
"Each fleeting joy of life she bids them seize,
Anxious for each gay pastime to provide;
See her fast spreading power increasing wide,
Adored and worshipped in each splendid dome!
Lo! Beauty glows for ever at her side,
She bids her cheek the unvarying rose assume:
And Bacchus sees for her his votive ivy bloom.

"Is aught then wanting in this fairy bower?
Or is there aught which yet thy heart can move?"
That heart, unyielding to their sovereign's power,
In gentle whispers sighing answers, "Love!"
While scornful smiles the fond reply reprove,
"Lo!" he exclaims, thy vanquished Cupid view;
He oft with powerful arms had vainly strove
Our sovereign's rocky fortress to subdue,
Now, subject to her reign, he yields obedience due."

Wondering she gazed around, a
An idiot child in golden chains
Rich cumbrous gems load all hi
A gaudy bandage seals his stup
And foul Desire his short-lived
By the capricious hand of Fash
Her sudden starts with tottering
Submissive to attend; him had
And Selfishness himself the nursli

With lustre false his tinsel arms
Ungraceful ornaments around hi
Gifts of his sportive guide; she
A glittering cord insultingly had
Loading its pendent purse with
And worthless dross, and ever as
His leaden darts, with wanton ai
Now here, now there, in careless
That oft their blunted force in emp

Shocked, from the gross impostu
With horror and disgust her fear
Her fate forlorn in silent anguish
And called her knight with many
But see, the crowds in sudden tu
The doors, fast closing to exclud

"Fly from these dangerous walls," his page exclaims;
Swift let us haste our floating bark to gain!
See thy knight's wondrous dart in terror flames;
Soon shall these ice-built walls no shape retain!
Nor can their Queen his dreaded sight sustain."
Scarcely she heard while rapidly she fled,
Even as a bird, escaped the wily train
The fowler with destructive art had spread,
Nor panting stays its flight, nor yet foregoes its dread.

See how astonished now the crowd supine,
Roused by his potent voice, confused arise;
In tottering masses o'er their heads decline
Dissolving walls; they gaze with wild surprise,
And each affrighted from the ruin flies:—
Pitying he views the vain unfeeling band
Beneath his care, a vile and worthless prize,
Their Queen alone his vengeful arms demand,
But unknown force was hers his terrors to withstand.

A shield she had of more than Gorgon power,
And whom she would she could transform to st
Nor ever had it failed her till that hour:
She proves his form invincible alone,
And calls its force petrific on her own.
Amazed he sees the indurated train,
The callous tenants of the silent throne,
And all the marble subjects of their reign,
Inviolably hard, their breathless shape retain.

The magic shield he thence in triumph bore,
Resolved, in pity to the human race,
Her noxious hands its might should guide no more,
And bade the seas conceal its Hydra face:
Oh! kindly meant, though much defeated grace!
For though the o'erwhelming weight of sounding waves
Conceal its rugged orb a little space,
Snatched by Glaucilla from the dark deep caves,
Once more the arm of Love with potent spell it braves.

But Psyche, rescued from their cruel scorn,
Urges her knight to hasten from the shore:
The buoyant vessel on the billows borne
Rides proudly o'er the mounting surge once more:
Again they spread the sails, the feathered oar
Skims with impatient stroke the sparkling tide;
The blushing Hymen now their smile restore
Again to frolic gaily at their side,
Though still their playful taunts reproach their slumbering guide.

Psyche looks back with horror on the coast;
Black, drear, and desolate is all the scene:
The rocky cliffs still human shape may boast;
There the sad victims of the cruel Queen,
Memorials of her baneful power, are seen:
No vine-crowned hills, no glowing vales appear,
Nor the white cottage laughs upon the green;
The black and leafless thorn alone is there,
And the chill mountains lift their summits wild and bare

Her spirits lighten as they leave behind
The dreary prospect of Glacella's isle;
She blest with gladdened heart the light-winged wind
That bears her swiftly from a scene so vile;
With glistening eye, and hope's prophetic smile,
She hears her knight fortel their dangers o'er,
That sure success shall crown their fated toil,
And soon arriving at that happy shore,
Love shall again be found, and leave his bride no more.

Now, from light slumbers and delicious dreams,
The jocund cry of joy aroused the fair;
The morn that kissed her eyes with golden beams,
Bade her the universal transport share;
Divinely breathed the aromatic air,
And Psyche's heart, half fainting with delight,
In the peculiar odour wafted there,
Recalled the breezes which, o'er scenes most bright,
Their wings of perfume shook, and lingering stayed
their flight.

The lovely shore the mariners descry,
And many a gladsome cheer the prospect hails;
Its graceful hills rise full before the eye,
While eagerly expanding all their sails
They woo the freshness of the morning gales,
The approaching scenes new-opening charms display,
And Psyche's palpitating courage fails,
She sees arrived at length the important day,
Uncertain yet of power the mandate to obey.

But one dear object every wish confines,
Her spouse is promised in that bower of rest;
And shall the sun that now so cheerful shines,
Indeed behold her to his bosom prest,
And in his heavenly smiles of fondness blest?
Oh! 'tis too much!—exhausted life she fears
Will struggling leave her agitated breast,
Ere to her longing eyes his form appears,
Or the soft hand of Love shall wipe away her tears

Oh! how impatience gains upon the soul
When the long-promised hour of joy draws near
How slow the tardy moments seem to roll!
What spectres rise of inconsistent fear!
To the fond doubting heart its hopes appear
Too brightly fair, too sweet to realize;
All seem but day-dreams of delight too dear!
Strange hopes and fears in painful contest rise,
While the scarce-trusted bliss seems but to cheat eyes.

But safely anchored in the happy port,
Led by her knight the golden sands she prest.
His heart beat high, his panting breath heaved sh
And sighs proclaim his agitated breast,
By some important secret thought opprest:
"At length," he cries, "behold the fated spring!
Yon rugged cliff conceals the fountain blest,
(Dark rocks its crystal source o'ershadowing,)
And Constance swift for thee the destined urn sl bring."

He speaks, but scarce she hears, her soul intent
Surveys as in a dream each well-known scene:
Now from the pointed hills her eye she bent
Inquisitive o'er all the sloping green;
The graceful temple meet for Beauty's queen,
The orange groves that ever blooming glow,
The silvery flood, the ambrosial air serene,
The matchless trees that fragrant shade bestow,
All speak to Psyche's soul, all seem their queen to know.

Let the vain rover, who his youth hath past
Misled in the idle search of happiness,
Declare, by late experience taught at last,
In all his toils he gained but weariness,
Wooed the coy goddess but to find that less
She ever grants where dearest she is bought;
She loves the sheltering bowers of home to bless,
Marks with her peaceful hand the favourite spot,
And smiles to see that Love has home his Psyche brought.

On the dear earth she kneels the turf to press
With grateful lips and fondly streaming eyes,
"Are these the unknown bowers of Happiness?
Oh! justly called, and gained at last!" she cries,
As eagerly to seize the urn she flies.
But lo! while yet she gazed with wondering eye,
Constance ascends the steep to gain the prize;
The eagle's eyry is not built so high
As soon she sees his star bright blazing to the sky.

With light and nimble foot the boy descends,
And lifts the urn triumphant in his hand;
Low at the turf-raised altar Psyche bends,
While her fond eyes her promised Love demand
Close at her side her faithful guardians stand,
As thus with timid voice she pays her vows,
"Venus, fulfilled is thine adored command,
Thy voice divine the suppliant's claim allows,
The smile of favour grant, restore her heavenly spou

Scarce on the altar had she placed the urn,
When lo! in whispers to the ravished ear
Speaks the soft voice of Love! "Turn, Psyche, t
And see at last, released from every fear,
Thy spouse, thy faithful knight, thy lover here!
From his celestial brow the helmet fell,
In joy's full glow, unveiled his charms appear,
Beaming delight and love unspeakable,
While in one rapturous glance their mingling
they tell.

Two tapers thus with pure converging rays,
In momentary flash their beams unite,
Shedding but one inseparable blaze
Of blended radiance and effulgence bright,
Self-lost in mutual intermingling light;
Thus in her lover's circling arms embraced,
The fainting Psyche's soul, by sudden flight
With his its subtlest essence interlaced;
Oh! bliss too vast for thought! by words ho
traced!

Fond youth whom Fate hath summoned to depart,
And quit the object of thy tenderest love,
How oft in absence shall thy pensive heart
Count the sad hours which must in exile move,
And still their irksome weariness reprove;
Distance with cruel weight but loads thy chain
With every step which bids thee farther rove,
While thy reverted eye, with fruitless pain,
Shall seek the trodden path its treasure to regain.

For thee what rapturous moments are prepared!
For thee shall dawn the long-expected day!
And he who ne'er thy tender woes hath shared,
Hath never known the transport they shall pay,
To wash the memory of those woes away:
The bitter tears of absence thou must shed,
To know the bliss which tears of joy convey,
When the long hours of sad regret are fled,
And in one dear embrace thy pains compensated!

Even from afar beheld, how eagerly
With rapture thou shalt hail the loved abode!
Perhaps already, with impatient eye,
From the dear casement she hath marked thy road,
And many a sigh for thy return bestowed:
Even there she meets thy fond enamoured glance:
Thy soul with grateful tenderness o'erflowed,
Which firmly bore the hand of hard mischance,
Faints in the stronger power of joy's overwhelming *trance.*

With Psyche thou alone can sym
Thy heart benevolently shares he
See her unclose her rapture-bean
And catch that softly pleasurable
That tells unutterable ecstasy!
While hark melodious numbers th
On clouds of fragrance wafted fro
Their ravished souls to pious awe
And lo! the herald doves the Quee

With fond embrace she clasped h
And gracefully received his lovel
"Psyche! thou hardly hast my fa
With roseate smile her heavenly
"Yet hence thy charms immortal
With the young Joys, thy future
Shall bloom for ever at thy lover's
All-ruling Jove's high mandate I
Blest denizen of Heaven! arise, its

She ceased, and lo! a thousand v
In sweetest chorus, Love's high t
There, with the Graces and the H
His fairy train their rosy garlands
Or round their mistress sport on l
While she enraptured lives in his
And drinks immortal love from th
Of never-failing full felicity,
Bathed in ambrosial showers of bl

Dreams of delight, farewell! your charms no more
Shall gild the hours of solitary gloom!
The page remains—but can the page restore
The vanished bowers which Fancy taught to bloom?
Ah! no: her smiles no longer can illume
The path my Psyche treads no more for me;
Consigned to dark oblivion's silent tomb,
The visionary scenes no more I see,
Fast from the fading lines the vivid colours flee!

NOTES.

Page 89. *Thus on his bark the bold Biscayen stands.*

The whale fishery, on the coast of Greenland, was first carried on by the sailors of the Bay of Biscay.

See Goldsmith's Animated Nature, vol. vi.

Page 122. *The mystic honours next of Fauna.*

Fauna, called also the Bona Dea, during her life was celebrated for the exemplary purity of her manners, and after death was worshipped only by women.

Page 123. ——————— *Bellerophon,*
And Peleus flying the Magnesian plain;

Ut Prætum mulier perfida credulum
Falsis impulerit criminibus, nimis
Casto Bellerophonti
Maturare necem, refert,
Narrat pene datum Pelea Tartaro,
Magnessam Hyppolyten dum fugit abstinens.

Hor. Ode vii. lib. iii.

Page 123. ——— *Acastus' mou*
Laodamia.

Page 123. *And thee, Dictyn*

A virgin of Crete, who threw hersel
into the sea, when pursued by Minos.
not contented with giving her name to t
she had thus consecrated, were accustom
Diana by the name of her unfortunate vot

Page 126. *Still in that tuneful for*

In a grove, sacred to Diana, was suspend
(the pipe into which the nymph Syringa
metamorphosed) which was said to possess
culous power of thus justifying the calumniat

Page 126. *The stream's rude ordeal—*

The trial of the Stygian fountain, by wh
innocent were acquitted, and the guilty disgrace
waters rising in a wonderful manner, so as to
the laurel wreath of the unchaste female who dar
examination.

Page 126. ——— *the daring Clusia—*

Who, to avoid the violence of Torquatus, cast herself from a tower, and was preserved by the winds, which, swelling her garments, supported her as she gently descended to the earth.

Page 126. —— *those, whom Vesta in the trying hour—*

Claudia, a vestal, who having been accused of violating her vow, attested her innocence by drawing up the Tiber, a ship bearing a statue of the goddess, which many thousand men had not been able to remove.—Æmilia, who was suspected of unchastity from having inadvertently suffered the sacred flame to expire, by entrusting it to the care of a novice, but imploring Vesta to justify her innocence, she tore her linen garment, and threw it upon the extinguished ashes of the cold altar; when in the sight of priests and virgins, a sudden and pure fire was thus enkindled.—Tucia, who being falsely accused, carried water from the Tiber to the forum in a sieve, her *accuser miraculously* disappearing at the same time.

chosen by the Sibyls to dedicate
Verticordia, in order to obtain g
contemporary country-women.

Page 127. ——— *Sin*

The nymph Sinope, being per
dresses of Jupiter, at length stipul
to grant her whatever she migh
obtained this promise, claimed th
chastity.

——————————— Sin
Nympha prius, blandosque Jovis
Cœlicolis inmota procis.—
Val. F

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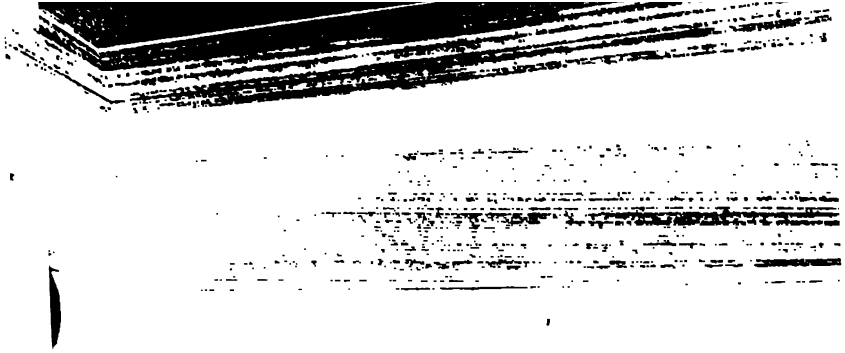
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